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The world of film animation and comic art

Funnyworld

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"Our student witch is a funny animals freak."

Special CARL BARKS Issue

Editorial

This is the last issue of *Funnyworld* — for a while, anyway. As many of you know, the magazine has been a money-losing proposition from the beginning, despite my efforts to at least break even. There was a brief, tantalizing moment in 1972 when it appeared that modest goal might be achieved, but since then, the combined inflation-recession has plunged *Funnyworld* into ever deeper baths of red ink. Despite my love for the magazine, I simply can't afford to continue to pour money into it, so I'm suspending publication until the economic picture is brighter. If it becomes necessary to kill *Funnyworld* outright, subscribers will receive refunds.

At least *Funnyworld* is going out in a blaze of glory, with this special Carl Barks issue. As anyone who has read much of my work knows, the Barks comics are what I love most in the whole animation/comics field, and it's been one of my great joys to help bring to Carl some of the wider recognition he has so long deserved.

The painting on the cover of this issue is the first in a series of non-Disney fantasy paintings by Carl. He began his famous series of Disney paintings in 1971, and is now moving into new areas. This departure from Disney-copyrighted subject matter has distinct advantages for both Carl and his fans. Carl can copyright such paintings in his own name, and — if the demand is there — can have deluxe prints made for sale to his fans. This would permit Carl's fans, most of whom can never hope to own an original painting, to own the next best thing. If you'd be interested in buying such a print (or, if you're a dealer, you'd be interested in a lot of them), let me know, and I'll pass the word to Carl.

The painting on this cover of *Funnyworld* is available for sale — by bid only. Bids should be submitted to me no later than *Friday, February 28, 1975.* After all bids have been received, the three highest bidders will be linked in a conference call for the final round of bidding. All money from the sale will go to Carl Barks; I am taking no commission.

Those who would like to see some more Barks art reproduced in color would do well to order *Graphic Gallery* No. 4 ($5.00 from Russ Cochran, Route One, Adel, Iowa 50003), which reproduces Barks paintings on its front and back covers. *Graphic Gallery* is a thick, beautifully printed magazine of original artwork for sale, but it's well worth the money even if you're like me, and can't afford any of that stuff.

Mike Barrier

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Letters to Mike Barrier

Gene Deitch was the creative head of Terrytoons in the 1950s, during that studio's brief flowering. It was while Deitch was in charge that Ralph Bakshi got his start at Terrytoons, and it was Deitch's firing that created the turmoil that permitted Bakshi to rise within the organization. Deitch thus read my article about Bakshi and Fritz the Cat *(in Nos. 14 and 15) with considerable interest, as reflected in his letter.*

From GENE DEITCH: Your long and revealing article on Ralph Bakshi brought tears to my eyes. The fact is that I heard nothing of what happened at Terrytoons after I left, and was getting this information for the first time from you! What great days those could have been. Why must there always be a William Weiss? . . . he will never realize that he alone nipped one of the last great chances to develop a new great studio. What a place in history!

A few of Bakshi's statements about my days at TT do not seem to be solidly based. He was, after all, just a lowly opaquer then, and though already very eager, was just not in a position to know what was cooking at the top. Limited animation was not my policy at all. It just so happens that a few pictures I was able to put into production for the purpose of getting some critical attention, an attempt to change the dreary image of Terrytoons, are about the only ones to survive in memory: *Flebus, The Juggler of Our Lady*, these were very personal style pictures, and the animation was in the character of the drawings, i.e., limited. However, our main flow of pictures, attempts to generate new running characters such as Gaston le Crayon, De Witt Clinton Clobber, etc., were all in animation as full as any done at Terrytoons. My main goal was to create funny theatrical cartoons in these series. Of course, animation must fit the specific drawing style. I personally do not present a "Deitch style" of cartooning, and I have always been against a house style. Till today I use many different designers, and the animation itself must grow out of whatever style is used . . .

Ralph's reference to our stories "making points obliquely" is also rather off-base. First of all, in 1957, obliquely was the only way anything resembling a point could be made! What was new, was the attempt to say anything at all in a cartoon. Perhaps it just never occurred to me that one of the important things to say was "Screw you!"

But otherwise the account of those days at Terrytoons was, sadly, the way it really was — though of course there is much more to it.

Tom Veitch, an underground cartoonist who works closely with Greg Irons, another undergrounder, also wrote in response to the Bakshi article.

From TOM VEITCH: Since you seem to be compiling an exhaustive account of the Ralph Bakshi saga, you oughta know that shortly after he finished *Fritz the Cat* he called Greg from L.A. and said he wanted his next picture to be based on Greg's work — with emphasis on the heavy political side. He asked

G.I. to fly down to L.A. to talk it over.

Greg was seriously interested and there were a bunch of phone calls back and forth. We laid plans how we were going to make Bakshi give us total control over the script and story board — the opposite of Crumb's approach.

But Greg kept putting off going to L.A., and Ralph stopped calling. Then *Fritz* was released and the next thing we heard was that Bakshi was working on *Heavy Traffic*. Greg said: "Oh wow . . . ***Heavy*** *Comix* . . . ***Heavy*** *Traffic* . . . shit!"

Underground cartoonists fell on hard times in 1973, largely because of a Supreme Court decision that seemed to give more muscle to local censors. Frightened distributors quickly backed away from comix. But recently the Marvel comic-book company published Comix Book *— a black-and-white, magazine-sized comic filled with the work of underground cartoonists. Denis Kitchen, a cartoonist whose Krupp Comic Works, Inc., became one of the biggest publishers of underground comics, tells in this letter how Krupp has fared and how* Comix Book *was born.*

From DENIS KITCHEN: Underground comics are not dead. Krupp is still selling a fair number of comix, printing an occasional new title, and reprinting certain popular classics. To my knowledge this is basically paralleled on the West Coast. But it is apparent that the slump that hit the industry in 1973 was not a temporary one. There have been brief bursts indicating the boom might return, but each proved short-lived. The underground comics industry, like the national economy, is basically stagnant.

There had long been talk among underground cartoonists about starting a national magazine. But these hopes were generally accompanied by paranoia. Stories of rip-offs, gouges, stolen art and Mafia were all synonymous with large Eastern publishers. But nobody else had the money or the distribution to back such a venture. When it finally became clear that the underground comics industry could no longer support a large number of cartoonists, I decided to at least investigate some alternatives.

I contacted Stan Lee, because I had maintained a sporadic correspondence with him since 1969. He offered encouragement at a point when the struggle was particularly tough, and I never forgot his kindness. Lee had offered me a position editing a new magazine in 1972, but at that time my own company, Krupp, was going full steam. It would have been foolish to desert something vital and personal for what seemed like a faceless corporation. A year and a half later, conditions forced a reassessment.

Carl Barks and his wife Gare visited Funnyworld's "offices" on Barkston Court in Atlanta last October.

Comix Book is not really an underground publication, not with its corner-drugstore distribution network. But it is not an ordinary newsstand comic either. It is not censored or affected in any way by the Comics Code Authority. It is not even officially a Marvel comic, only financed by the same company. And nearly every contributor originated in underground comics. If anything, it is an experiment to determine if there is a mass audience for underground cartoonists, or whether they are, by definition, limited to cult followings.

Comix Book is by no means intended to replace underground comix, however. Some comix artists could probably never make the transition to newsstands. S. Clay Wilson's sex-violence epics are too raw. Griffin and Moscoso, despite their incredible graphics, lack the narrative to reach large numbers. Crumb and Shelton are too good to need to make the transition. They are better off remaining in the underground. And as long as they keep producing, an alternate press is assured.

So underground comics will survive and, hopefully, even thrive. But they will forever be hampered by poor distribution. What is likely is that other magazines similar to *Comix Book* will surface. There is already talk of two other national comix publications in the works.

National magazines, like *Comix Book*, may provide the financial security certain artists need, but the artists may continue to produce their very best work for the underground market.

Mark Evanier, a writer for Gold Key comics, had a complaint about the Carl Barks bibliography, which winds up in this issue.

From MARK EVANIER: About your Carl Barks bibliography: It's about time. But I, for one, am not terribly enthralled by your manner of presentation. Carl Barks wrote marvelous stories but you'd never know it by your bare-bones plot summaries. I can see no point to them unless your goal is to spoil the stories for anyone who hasn't read them. A one-line precis, I could understand, since most story titles provide insufficient identification. But to encapsulate the skeletal plot-lines of a Barks story, complete with surprise endings, in a dry, humorless manner, is wholly unnecessary. As I see it, it's padding for the bibliography. And all that padding will necessitate a high price tag, thereby discouraging potential Barks fans from joining in on the wonderful world of Carl Barks.

In case anyone is trying to keep up with my work, I have contributed to two books and two magazines since the last issue of *Funnyworld* appeared.

●*The Comic-Book Book*, edited by Don Thompson and Dick Lupoff (Arlington House; 360 pages; $8.95), contains "The Duck Man," an 18-page essay on Carl Barks.

●*Frank Tashlin*, edited by Claire Johnston and Paul Willemen (Edinburgh Film Festival, 1973; paperbound, 151 pages; 1.10 British pounds) includes portions of an interview I conducted with Tashlin in 1971, about his work in animation.

●The Summer 1974 issue of the American Film Institute's *AFI Report* (available for $1.50 from AFI, Kennedy Center, Washington D.C. 20566) contains my article "Of Mice, Wabbits, Ducks and Men: The Hollywood Cartoon," a survey of American animation that is, in effect, a preview of my book on the subject for Oxford University Press.

●The March-April 1974 issue of *Print* ($3.00 from RC Publications, Inc., 19 W. 44th St., New York, N.Y. 10036) includes an article by me on Ralph Bakshi; I adapted portions of the article for use in my review of *Heavy Traffic* in this issue of *Funnyworld*.

Mike Barrier

SHE WAS SINGING "AFTER THE BALL" IN A VOICE, AS PRETTY AS THE CRACKLE OF NEW BILLS!
HA! ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS AT COMPOUND INTEREST!... WAIT TILL I GET MY HANDS ON THAT OLD GAL!

My Secret Life

By Scrooge McDuck

Or, The Unpublished Carl Barks

By KIM WESTON

Carl Barks' published comic-book work runs into the thousands of pages — but there are dozens of pages of Barks artwork that were intended for publication, and never made it. Some of these pages were culled by Barks himself, before he even submitted certain stories to his publisher, because he was dissatisfied with them. Still more — including some entire stories — were junked by Western Publishing Co., for reasons that now seem misguided at best. Other Barks stories were published with mutilating changes, made either because a censor's sensibilities were offended or for simple mechanical reasons, such as the need to make room for the circulation statement required by the Post Office.

Fortunately, much of the unpublished Barks work has survived; of these surviving pages, most are now in the hands of private collectors. As many or more of the "lost" Barks pages are truly lost — they have vanished without a trace, and we have been left with only a few clues as to what they were like.

Barks' unpublished work covers a lot of ground, including one-page gags and cover drawings as well as pages and panels from stories. In addition to his unpublished work for Western Publishing, there are many other unpublished items — model sheets, ideas for covers that were rejected before being drawn in finished form, practice poses and studies, drawings for fans. Attempting a complete list would be a hopeless task. This article does not cover all of Barks' unpublished work, but only the major categories: Unpublished stories, unpublished pages from published stories, and changes in published stories.

By far the most important of the known unpublished Barks pages are the pages cut from "Back to the Klondike" (*Uncle Scrooge* one shot No. 456, 1953). Originally the story was 32 pages. As published it was only 27. A five-page sequence was cut following page 11 of the published story. These pages change the characters' motivation, make Scrooge a much more sympathetic character, and Goldie less so. They tie up loose ends, contain some very fine episodes and gags, and reveal aspects of Scrooge's character not previously known.

The deleted sequence begins after Scrooge turns to walk out the door of the Black Jack Ballroom (page 11, panel 8). The nephews trip him, demanding, "Don't be so doggoned GREEDY! Tell us what happened when you met Goldie!" And thus begins a flashback sequence. Scrooge tells how he walked into the bar and ordered coffee, and how the sneers that followed stopped when he emptied his gold poke and out came the goose egg nugget, a hunk of solid gold bigger than his fist. "*Suddenly Glittering Goldie was there in a long dive for the nugget!*" "What a JEWEL!" she exclaims. "Don't be so doggoned grabby!" replies Scrooge. Goldie hustles him off to a back room

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for coffee. *"I don't know what Goldie put in my coffee!"* Scrooge reminisces, *"but I awoke hours later in a snowdrift six miles from town! . . .* drugged and rolled. Nobody can take gold from Scrooge McDuck! There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight!" He walks back to town and stands in the doorway, doors swung apart. "Weaklings and cowards have ten seconds to clear out!" Goldie giggles. And then comes a fight to end all fights, which includes a beautiful half-page panel that Gary Brown once described as "like Jack Kirby with ducks," an understatement if anything.

"When it was all over I cornered the star of the North on the balcony!" climbing up on a mound of bodies: "I'll trouble you for my goose egg nugget, mam!" *"She gave it to me but good!* (right on the head) *There was a girl with SPIRIT! But the other gold in my poke had been stolen! I made her give me an I.O.U. for it!":* "One thousand dollars, mam, at COMPOUND INTEREST, or I tear this dive apart splinter by splinter!" And he would have. Goldie: "There! Now GET OUT!" Scrooge: "I aim to, mam! But YOU'RE GOING WITH ME!" *"I took her along, screaming like a singed cat!"* Goldie: "Where are you taking me, you wolf?" Scrooge: "To my claim! You're going to learn how HARD a miner works for his gold! *"And there at my diggings I made her work for a month!"* Scrooge: "Keep digging, mam, or you don't get any supper!" Goldie: "But I'm starving now! And my dress is in rags!" Scrooge: "You can buy a new dress when you get back to town! Buy it this time with money you earned SQUARE, not by drugging miners and stacking cards!" *"When the month was up I paid her off!"* "Fifty cents a day is all you earned, and it's all you get!" *"She threw the money in my face and stomped off!"* Goldie: "I dug more gold than you did, tightwad!"

Thus end the four pages that are known to still exist. But internal structural evidence strongly points to the following conclusion: Another one and a half pages were cut immediately following these four pages, and the four panels that form the top half of published page 12 were salvaged from that one and a half pages and used to connect published pages 11 and 12 while eliminating the whole flashback sequence. I suspect that nothing of real importance is in the eliminated panels, perhaps another panel or so to finish up the flashback, preparations for the trip, and a more extensive and scenic trip than is shown in the four remaining panels. Perhaps even those cut panels still exist, but I don't know of anyone who has uncovered them yet.

Carl Barks explained the cuts in a letter to me dated February 17, 1972: The sequence "was cut out of the story at the editorial office in Beverly Hills in 1952. I was a little skeptical of whether I could get by with such a bar room atmosphere but I did it anyway for fun. Such pages, when cut from stories were never returned to me . . . the sequence was cut because of violence and dance hall atmosphere." Barks has also said that Western didn't like the idea of Scrooge kidnaping Goldie, thus breaking the law.

The first known alteration of Barks' work was in 1943, in the last page of the "Happy Hound" story in *Our Gang* No. 9, where several panels were trimmed to make way for a circulation statement.

Of somewhat more significance are the changes made in the "Donald Duck" story in *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* No. 42 (1944), the "Happy Hound" story in *Our Gang* No. 11 (1944), and the "Barney Bear and Benny Burro" stories in *Our Gang* No. 18 (1945) and 21 (1946). The "Donald Duck" story was written and drawn as a ten-page story (with six-panel pages) and published as a seven-pager. This story was cut up, panels were trimmed or expanded, and the panels were pasted up in eight- or ten-panel (four-line) pages instead of the original six-panel (three-line) pages. Apparently, no panels were omitted. Similar alterations were made in the "Happy Hound" story. In some panels in both stories, drawings not by Barks were added to fill in the empty spaces caused by the alterations in his panels.

The two "Barney and Benny" stories were originally drawn with four lines of panels to the page. In *Our Gang* No. 18, the story was condensed from eight pages to six by cutting up, trimming panels, and so on. In *Our Gang* No. 21, the reverse occurred. The story was originally six pages, with ten panels to the page, but was expanded to eight pages, with three lines of panels on each page. Again, pages were cut up, and panels were trimmed and pasted up in the new format.

The stories in *Walt Disney's* No. 42 and *Our Gang* No. 11 were victims of shrinking comic-book size. *Our Gang*, for instance, shrank from 68 to 60 to 52 pages over a period of five issues (No. 6 to No. 10). There were too many pages of material to fit in the number of printed pages available so rather than omit artwork already paid for the publisher trimmed stories in the least painful manner to fit the space available. The "Barney and Benny" story in *Our Gang* No. 18 was a victim of the same situation when *Our Gang* shrank to 36 pages for several issues. In *Our Gang* No. 21, just the opposite happened. The war was over, paper restrictions were off, and *Our Gang* was once again 52 pages. The "Barney and Benny" story was stretched to fill some of the newly available space.

In 1944, Barks drew a Porky Pig story ("Porky of the Mounties," *Porky Pig* Four Color No. 48). Changes of a different type occur in this story. If you look carefully at the heads of Bugs Bunny, Petunia and Porky, you will occasionally see small black lines where drawings were pasted over Barks' originals. Barks said of the story: " . . . a few of the Porky or Petunia faces may have been reworked by the staff artists in the

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Kim Weston is a Carl Barks fan of long standing and one of the few people around with a complete collection of Barks' comic-book work.

This article is really just a starting point. We believe that there is more unpublished Barks artwork in private hands than is listed in this article, and our goal is to locate as much of it as possible before the publication this year of the complete Carl Barks bibliography. If you have or know of any unpublished pages or panels not mentioned in this article, or mentioned as unknown, lost, probably destroyed, or otherwise missing, please contact Kim Weston or Mike Barrier, in care of *Funnyworld's* address. The same holds for other unpublished Barks material, such as drawings for covers and sketches for fans. We would like to know of the existence of such material, at the very least, and when possible, we would like to obtain copies. We can offer, *in trade only*, some of the unpublished material mentioned in the article. Please help if you can.

K.W. and M.B.

The panels published with this article are all from the published versions of the Barks stories; permission could not be obtained to reproduce any of the unpublished artwork. All illustrations for this article are copyright © Walt Disney Productions.

editorial room. All of the Bugs heads had to be redrawn, which pleased me very much. I am sure that if my Bugs had been acceptable, the office would have added that series to my work load" (letter, August 21, 1974).

The story "The Firebug" in *Donald Duck* one-shot No. 108 (1946) is the first known instance of a censor's intrusion (not including, of course, Barks' own, very conscientious self-censorship). The last two panels of the story are not by Barks. Barks says, "The office redrew and changed (the) last two panels. I had ended the story with Don in jail" for accidently burning down the courthouse. As redrawn, Donald awakens and finds that his adventures as a firebug have all been a bad dream. The original ending has no doubt been destroyed.

In a letter to a fan dated March 22, 1961, Barks mentions "The Golden Christmas Tree" (*Donald Duck* one-shot No. 203, 1948): "I felt sourly about the finished story because the editors had made me do some changes in the fight sequences between Don and the witch that I thought took the guts out of the story. I still gag when I read the last two pages of the story. But the rest of the tale was robust enough." In a more recent letter (October 3, 1973), Barks says, "About the last two pages of 'The Golden Christmas Tree' ... only the last four panels are mine as they were in the original. I still wince at the preachy stuff I had to put in about the 'spirit of Christmas'." In earlier sections, the story seems to be intact up to page 9, but the bottom half of page 10 (probably redrawn) appears to have been drawn separately from the top half and a number of top and bottom halves from that point on don't quite match, so there were probably a couple of cuts or redrawn halves between pages 10 and 18, in addition to the changes in the last two pages.

"Trick or Treat" in *Donald Duck* No. 26 (1952) has the somewhat dubious distinction of being the story with the greatest number of pages cut — probably ten and a half but maybe more. More pages of art may have been drawn for it than for any other Barks story (at least 33 1/2.) It was originally a 32-page story that Barks had been asked to adapt from a Donald Duck cartoon of the same title. (The cartoon was directed by Jack Hannah, once Barks' partner in the Disney story department.)

After the title and credits, the cartoon starts with Hazel flying over town and around the church steeple, and that is how the comic story originally opened. The original splash panel is a view of Duckburg from a graveyard, and of Hazel heading for the steeple. The bottom half of published page 2 followed immediately. This splash panel was dropped, possibly for being too gruesome, and instead of just a different splash, one and one half pages were added to the story. One reason that has been suggested for this is that since this *is* a *Donald Duck* comic book, the title character really ought to appear on the first page, and as originally done, Donald did not appear until page 4 and even the nephews did not appear until page 3. It appears that the caption in panel 4 of published page 2 was either added or expanded to provide a transition from the added opening sequence. The story is then intact up to published page 16 (page 15 as originally numbered) and it follows the cartoon fairly closely, though the page 4 and page 10 sequences do not appear in the cartoon, nor does the page between panel 4 of page 16 and panel 6 of page 17.

Also, at this point comes a six-page sequence (originally numbered pages 16 to 21) in which Hazel, following Donald's comment on published page 16 that "It'll take more than a WITCH to get candy from Donald Duck," transforms herself into a beautiful girl duck (1/2 page), gets candy from Donald (1), reveals herself as the witch, and hops on her broom with the candy and kids (1/2). Donald lassoes them and retrieves the candy (1/2). Hazel vows revenge and conjures up her pet, a six-armed, derby-hatted ogre named Smorgasbord, better known as Smorgie the Bad (1/2). She sics Smorgie on Donald (1/2) and Donald is in the process of fighting him to a standstill when these six known pages end. I suspect that there are two more pages in which Smorgie is dispatched, and then the story picks up with published page 17. As a matter of fact, I believe that is Smorgie's derby hat that Hazel is stomping on in panel 1 of that page, so that would probably be page 24 by the original numbering. This whole sequence was added by Barks and does not appear in the cartoon.

From page 17 panel 5 to page 19 panel 5 (probably 24 to 26 by the original numbering), the story follows the cartoon fairly closely. But from page 19 panel 5 to page 20 panel 1, there is a break. At this point in the cartoon, Donald grabs a rug to anchor himself and keep from being dragged around too much and Hazel sprays a cactus plant which grows in size and smacks Donald in the tail, knocking the key out. Donald catches it in his mouth and swallows it again. Then Hazel has Donald's feet swing south towards the fire to burn the key out, as in page 19 panels 6-8.

I suspect that at this point in the story, Barks reversed the cactus and fire sequences. Panels 6-8 of page 19 probably were originally page 27 panels 2-4. Judging from the below-mentioned page 28 (top) and the cartoon, I would guess that after Hazel tells Donald's feet, "Harder, feet! Kick like mules!," there follow four panels of that action, with Donald being bounced on the floor and brought to the fire as in page 19 panels 5 to 8. Next would come a half page of Donald catching the key in his mouth and swallowing it again. Then would come page 28.

A half page numbered as the top half of page 28 is known. Its content follows: Hazel (spraying a cactus plant with witch's brew which animates it) says, "Toughest knave I ever saw! He needs a partner!" and "Stomp along and don't be lazy! That's the ticket — bumps-a-daisy" (as the cactus plant backs up to Don's tail and out comes the key.) Donald and a nephew race toward the key with Donald exclaiming, "I'll not give it up! I'll not! I'll not!" I suspect that a half page (28 bottom) of contention over the key follows with it ending up in Hazel's hands (published page 20,

panel 1.) This would mean that pages originally numbered 29-32 of the story are intact and were published as pages 20 to 23.

Pages 20 to 23 (originally pages 29 to 32) basically follow the cartoon to the end but there are differences: in the cartoon, Hazel leaves the key on the floor and Donald just picks it up to slide it under the door. Donald is battered against the closest door head first in the cartoon, rather than tail first. The sequence in the top half of page 21 does not appear in the cartoon and no suit of armor is used in the cartoon sequence corresponding to pages 21 and 22. And finally, Donald does not appear at all in the cartoon sequence corresponding to the last page of the story.

One panel that fits in place of the seventh panel of page 10 of the mountain-climbing story in *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* No. 157 (1953) exists, which implies that the last three panels of the story were cut and replaced by the published dream ending. The unpublished panel has the caption "So henceforth on — everyday!" and shows Scrooge (gloating) walking after Donald (about ready to explode) and saying, "WELL? When are you going to think of something else you can beat me at?" The dream ending has a great punch line, but I'd sure like to know what was originally in the other panels. Barks says, in an October 3, 1973 letter, that this "was quite likely changed to a dream ending by me. I believe I recall looking at the panel of Uncle Scrooge's money ramp and deciding it looked too *impossible* to be real."

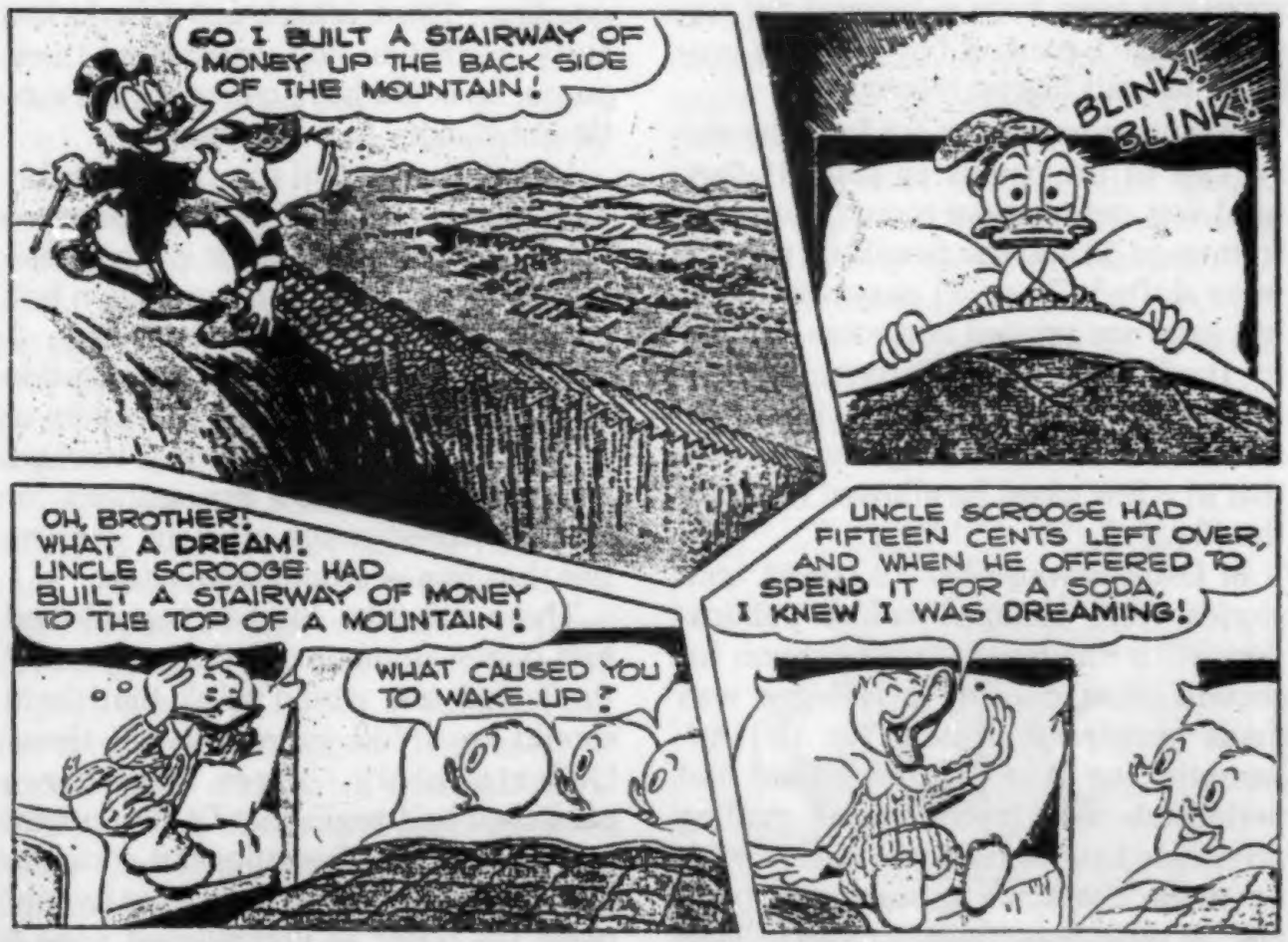
There exists a half page cut from the second story in *Uncle Scrooge* one-shot No. 495 (1953) in which the first dime is introduced. This page came from Barks' "scrap pile" and appears to fit in place of the published top half of page 9 of the story. So it is apparently a page that Barks discarded in his own revisions of the story. There must have been more extensive revisions than this, though, because the page is numbered as the top half of page 10. No other unpublished material from this story is known, however.

I suspect that the message-in-a-bottle story in *Uncle Scrooge* No. 8 (1954) was originally planned as a 32-page story but that Barks was dissatisfied with it and, at various stages, edited it down to 28. I know of one and a half unpublished pages from this story which went to fans out of Barks' "scrap pile." And in reference to another story, Barks once wrote, "I often made such cuts in my stories whenever I detected any draggy spots. Usually this sort of cutting took place before the final inking," but not always.

There are two unfinished two-panel strips (quarter pages) that fit with page 13. I say they are unfinished because they don't have the solid blacks inked in yet, but they are otherwise complete. So they were probably edited out by Barks fairly early, before the pages were finally finished and numbered. A good case could be made for saying that these four panels were originally the second and third lines of page 13 and that the published second line of that page was originally the bottom line, but that the dialogue was changed and it was shifted up to follow line 1 when the others were cut. This may not be what did happen, but it seems a reasonable explanation. The two strips are somewhat ambiguous in that it is not clear which comes first. One line is a flashback in which the Beagle Boy recalls, "*We slithered in behind this cliff and all the boys but me went ashore for the raid!*" One of the Beagle Boys pictured says, "Quiet! This'll be a SNEAK job!" The next caption is, "*They climbed the cliff! I watched 'em! And then — And then —.*" The other line has the scene back on the boat. Huey says, "WHAT?" and the Beagle Boy says, "ZOWIE! Just like that they turned to STONE!" Huey: "You expect us to believe THAT?" Beagle: "It's the TRUTH! Somebody did it! Maybe MARTIANS with a RAY!" There could be more cut here, though, and this explanation may be wrong.

Two other finished half pages are known. One, numbered 16 (top), fits neatly immediately after published page 15. Donald says, "I'll help you, Uncle Scrooge!" and one of the nephews says, "Come back here!" Donald tells the nephews they are worrying too much and convinces the two with him to come up and help Scrooge. In the fourth panel we see Huey, still down on the beach questioning the Beagle Boy. There could be another half page between this and the published top of page 16. Or it is possible that the published top could have just been added to replace this one.

The other known half page would fit in place of the bottom half of page 17 (although that implies that another half page or more was probably cut between it and published page 18). In the first two panels, Scrooge says, "Sure enough! I can HEAR the ray bouncing off me — Zing! Zing! Zing!" "That means I'm safe while I get the boys out of danger!" The other two panels on this half page are identical to panels 5 and 6 of published page 17 but redrawn and with different shading. I suspect that what is published as the bottom half of page 17 was a half page that was redrawn to replace and condense a page or more in the original version. This story, I think, had a rough gestation period and required a lot of revising. However, too many pieces of this particular puzzle are missing to say exactly what happened. I feel reasonably sure that up to three more full pages from this story exist or did exist and were probably given away to fans by Barks many years ago. (However, Barks believes that his changes in the story may have been "substitutions, rather than cuts.")


SO I BUILT A STAIRWAY OF MONEY UP THE BACK SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN!
BLINK! BLINK!
OH, BROTHER! WHAT A DREAM! UNCLE SCROOGE HAD BUILT A STAIRWAY OF MONEY TO THE TOP OF A MOUNTAIN!
WHAT CAUSED YOU TO WAKE-UP?
UNCLE SCROOGE HAD FIFTEEN CENTS LEFT OVER, AND WHEN HE OFFERED TO SPEND IT FOR A SODA, I KNEW I WAS DREAMING!

MEANWHILE DONALD AND UNCLE SCROOGE HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO THE NEST OF THE LARKIES!
WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU GIGGLING BIRD-BRAINS CELEBRATING?
HEE! HEE! HEE!
HEE! HEE!
OUR SUCCESSFUL TRIP TO YOUR COUNTRY TO FIND A RICH TASTER!
AND THE FIRST SUCKER THAT FELL FOR OUR GOLDEN FLEECE STORY WAS YOU!
THE RICHEST OLD DUCK IN ALL THE WORLD! HEE! HEE!.. HEE! HEE!.. HEE! HEE!

For the taffy story in *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* No. 175 (1955), there are presently known one and a quarter pages of unpublished art. The sequence is numbered as the last two panels of page 6 and all of page 7 of the story, and begins with Donald running into the Akin-Bones Hospital calling, "Wait! Stop! Don't anybody eat that candy!" Donald tells the nurses not to eat the candy because there is something in it, but he can't tell them what. They think he is trying to trick them and he gets the candy back only by buying it at a dollar a bag. He eats it hoping to find the lost diamond ring, doesn't, and soon meets Louie who gives him the good (?) news that he "sold all 17 bags to the men at the boiler factory!" This sequence does not fit neatly in the space indicated by the page numbers, so rather extensive revisions probably were made, although no more artwork from this story is known to exist. Barks has said that he dropped this sequence because it wasn't visual enough. The artwork found its way into fans' hands from Barks' scrap pile.

In a letter to a fan, Barks mentioned that the six-page story of Donald as a dogcatcher in *Donald Duck* No. 45 (1956) was originally written and drawn as an eight-page story "but the editors whittled it down to six to fit a special hole in a rush. In the process they got some panels reversed on the bottom half of page 5, leaving the story a badly jumbled mess." On page 5 of the story, the proper sequence of panels is 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 5, 6. That is, the bottom line of panels should come between the second and third lines. Judging from Donald's comment on page 3 panel 3, a sequence involving the police department was eliminated between line 1 and line 2 of that page, and a careful look through the story reveals indications of extensive cutting and repasting, which is to be expected if a quarter of the story was dropped.

In a letter to a fan commenting about reasons why Donald was less vital in 1960 than in the old days, Barks mentioned that taboo after taboo was imposed on the scripter's freedom. He mentioned "The Golden Fleecing," *Scrooge* No. 12 (1955): "Well, I almost had to eat those 32 pages of drawings because I'd used some harpies as menaces. It seems that Harpy or Harpie is an obscure nickname for a streetwalker. I managed to save the story by renaming the old girls LARKIES." At another time Barks said that in addition to changing the names he had to redraw a page or two. There exist at least two panels of drawings from the story as originally done, panels 1 and 3 of page 16. Scrooge and Donald are sitting in a Harpy nest and five Harpies are frolicking and somersaulting in the air shouting "Whee!" and "Hee! Hee! Hee!" In the other panel four Harpies are shown and one of them is speaking. In the margins of the page are notes from the editor revising the word Harpies to Larkies in the caption and telling Barks to bring Scrooge and Donald in the nest into the foreground and show only a couple of Larkies. In the other panel Barks is advised to show a close-up on only one Larky. No changes in dialogue are made. Some panels other than the ones with Harpy-Larky name changes appear to have been relettered, for example page 9 panel 3, but these are probably to omit Harpy references.

One other panel was cut from the story: One of the panels on page 31 (bottom) was cut to make room for a panel from page 32 and the panels on page 32 were shifted. Thus, all panels from the last page are printed and room is made for the Dell Pledge to Parents. (Cuts of this type were made in many Barks stories in the 1950s, although he believes that in a few cases he allowed room for the Pledge.)

In *Uncle Scrooge* No. 13 (1956), both stories were changed before publication. With this issue, an application for second-class mailing privileges was made (granted with issue No. 15.) Apparently, the Post Office required that periodicals with second-class mailing privileges have at least two stories, with no single character appearing in both, and at least one page of text. That would seem to be indicated by the changes made in the issue.

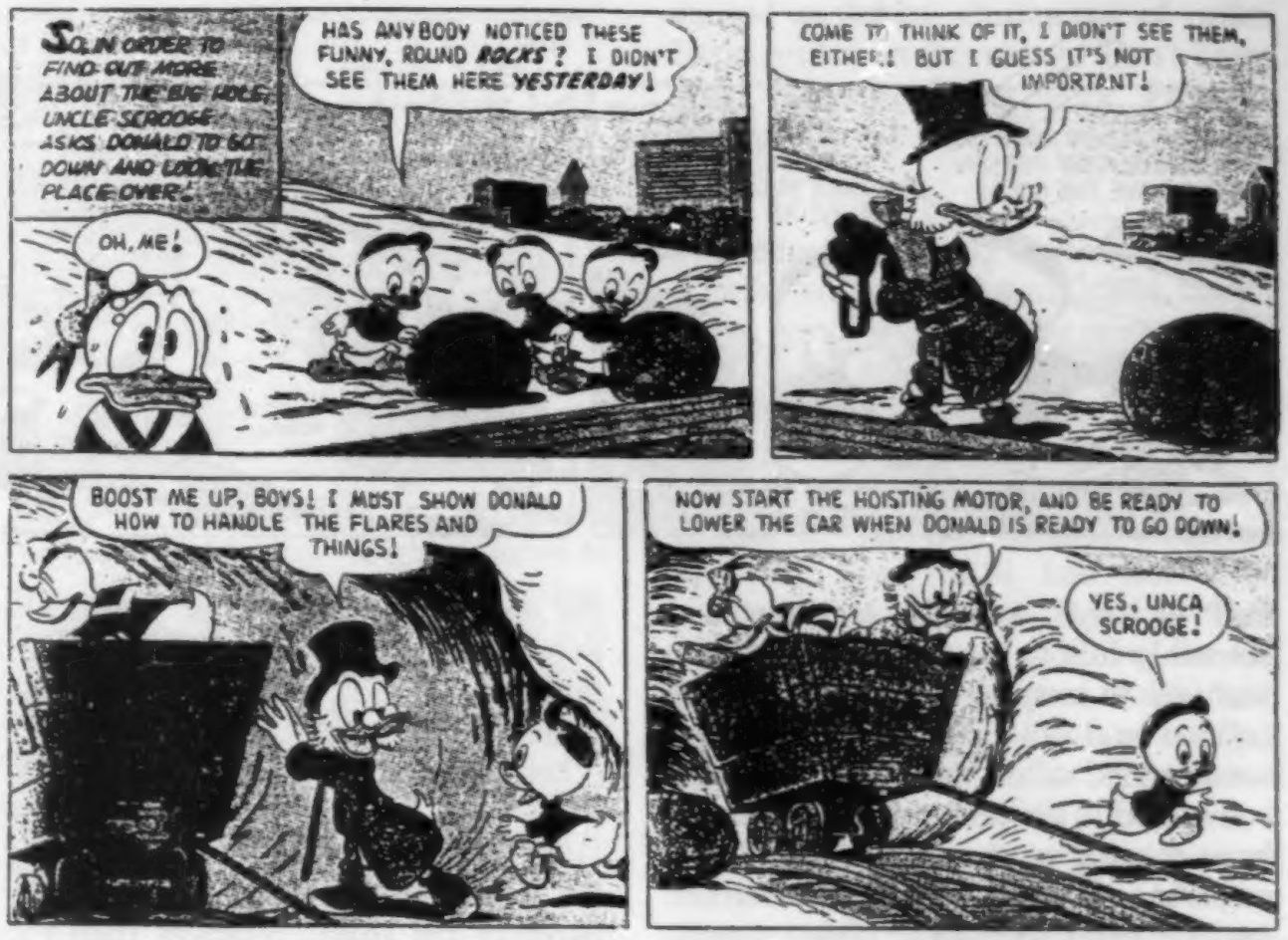
"Land Beneath the Ground" was originally a 32-page story. The first cuts are made between pages 2 and 5 with the net elimination of two pages. And there is almost certainly some redrawing and changes in text. I say this for several reasons. First, some panels look like they have been relettered, or had captions or figures added or changed. Second, the natural rhythm and flow of a Barks story is not present in these pages but disrupted in such a way that I have long had a feeling that something just wasn't right about the story. Now I think I know why — two pages were cut from the beginning against a tight deadline. Third, I think that if Barks had fully redrawn and rewritten these pages, he could have corrected the subtle imbalances that are there.

I think that part of the cuts (probably one page) occur within or between published pages 2 and 3. It is also possible that the first cut is an unknown half page that follows published page 3. These cuts could involve consultation with the professors at the university or a gag about paying the tunnel workers or perhaps Scrooges's preparations for his own investigation after the workers flee, but this is strictly conjecture.

There are two known unpublished half pages, numbered 5 (bottom) and 7 (top), and one would think that there should be a full page between them. Unfortunately, there are *three* published half pages that fit very neatly between them. This rules out a simple explanation of these cuts that would place the order as unpublished page 5

(bottom), then an unknown missing half page, published page 4 and the top of published page 5, the top of unpublished 7, and then the bottom of published page 5. It also necessitates a more complicated and less plausible explanation. The top half of published page 4 could originally have been the top half of page 5 and in cutting and revising, the panel 1 caption could have been expanded, and Donald added to the picture. The kids' dialogue in panel 1 and all of panel 2 could have been left unchanged. The dialogue in panels 3 and 4 and Donald's expression would have been changed. He would have been just helping Scrooge load the mine cart originally. In the half page numbered 5 (bottom), Scrooge has the supplies already loaded in the cart. Donald asks him who he plans to have accompany him down as an observer. Scrooge asks Donald if he has $500 and coerces Donald into accompanying him down, using a 1950 IOU for 50 cents that — at compound interest — now amounts to $500. This would explain the pained expression on Donald's face in panel 1 of page 4, a face that I think was clipped from elsewhere and added here. Next would come the bottom half of published page 4 but since it does not fit neatly in its present state, major revisions would have to have been made there. I can't think of a better explanation except that Barks numbered the 5 (bottom) half page wrong (perhaps it was 4), but I am inclined to rule out that possibility. I don't find this explanation of the origins of what is published as page 4 very satisfying. I am open to suggestions.

Published page 5 (top) fits perfectly after published page 4 (bottom) and before unpublished page 7 (top.) In 7 (top) the kids ask rhetorically who could have pulled the cable pin since there was nobody and nothing there except those round rocks. They conjecture about invisible men — invisible jokers playing unfunny jokes. The bottom half of published page 5 (originally numbered as the bottom half of page 7) follows and the story is unbroken through pages 6 and 7 (8 and 9 originally) up to panel 1 of page 8. The next nine panels (originally numbered as page 10 and the first two panels of page 11) are dropped and replaced by panel 2 of page 8, a panel added to make up for the nine panels dropped. The result is another page eliminated from the story length. In this eliminated page, the kids locate Donald and Scrooge behind a pillar, and still in the mine cart, which is looping around inside the arch. The


SO, IN ORDER TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE BIG HOLE, UNCLE SCROOGE ASKS DONALD TO GO DOWN AND LOOK THE PLACE OVER.
HAS ANYBODY NOTICED THESE FUNNY, ROUND ROCKS? I DIDN'T SEE THEM HERE YESTERDAY!
OH, ME!
COME TO THINK OF IT, I DIDN'T SEE THEM, EITHER! BUT I GUESS IT'S NOT IMPORTANT!
BOOST ME UP, BOYS! I MUST SHOW DONALD HOW TO HANDLE THE FLARES AND THINGS!
NOW START THE HOISTING MOTOR, AND BE READY TO LOWER THE CAR WHEN DONALD IS READY TO GO DOWN!
YES, UNCA SCROOGE!

kids suggest that they yank off a sideboard and use it to jam the wheels as a brake (as the nephews had done on published page 5.) Donald asks, "How come WE don't get any ideas like this?" Scrooge answers, "Don't ask me! I only know how to make money!" The idea works fine, but unfortunately, the car stops at the *top* of the loop.

The story picks up with panel 3 of page 8 and appears to be intact up through page 20. On pages 21 and 22 there appears to be evidence of more cuts (misaligned panels are the usual evidence.) So the final two pages of cuts were probably made between the end of page 20 and the beginning of page 23, though it is possible that a page was dropped somewhere else between pages 9 and 27. However only two panels of these two suspected pages are known to exist. In the first panel, Donald says, "More speed! It's growing PITCH DARK up here! We can't be FAR from the shaft!" and in the second, two Terry Fermians shout, "PUSH, YOU FERMIES! RAH! RAH! RAH!" "ROLL, YOU TERRIES! CHA! CHA! CHA!" This seems to fit with the top half of page 21.

The five pages were cut, presumably, to make room for the text page and the four-page Gyro story, The Gyro stories in both issues 13 and 14 were changed. Barks writes, "The four-page Gyro stories for Uncle Scrooge No. 13 and 14 were sent back to me for changes. In the No. 13 story I'd used the nephews. Because of postal mailing laws, no characters used in other parts of the book could be used in the Gyro story. Hence the change to Mickey's nephews. The character 'Speedy' in No. 14 was originally Donald."

In "The Golden River" *(Uncle Scrooge* No. 22, 1958), one page was cut. Perhaps on looking over this story after he had finished it, Barks thought it could use a couple of more gags and a little less straight business, so he chopped a page of straight stuff and added a page of gags. Because the top and bottom halves of pages 4 and 5 are not perfectly aligned and because the bottom

IT HAS EVEN GOT SOME KIND OF PHOSPHORUS LIGHT!
HEY! LISTEN! I HEAR UNCA DONALD AND UNCA SCROOGE!
THERE THEY ARE, COMING OUT OF THAT LAKE!
BLURP! BURBLE!
HANG US UPSIDE DOWN TO DRAIN! WE PLOWED A MILE UNDER WATER BEFORE THAT FOOL CAR STOPPED ROLLING!

YOU REMEMBER IN THE STORY OF THE GOLDEN RIVER ONLY AN *UNSELFISH* PERSON COULD HAVE THE GOLD!
IF YOU'RE HINTING THAT A *CERTAIN* RICH OLD DUCK WILL HAVE TO CHANGE HIS WAYS, YOU ARE MAYBE HALF RIGHT!
I'M SURE YOU KIDS ARE BRINGING ME *BAD LUCK*! I WISH YOU'D GO *HOME* BEFORE YOU BRING ME MORE!
SWELL! WE'RE NOT HAVING SUCH *GOOD* LUCK, OURSELVES!

half of page 5 could logically and smoothly follow the top of page 4, I am inclined to suspect that the half-page balloon and stilt gags on those pages were added after the story had been completed. This added a page of gags here, moving up the numbering of later pages by one page. The cut page, which really doesn't subtract anything significant from the story, and which is numbered as page 16 (panels 1-4, 6-8) and panels 1 and 2 of page 17, follows published page 16 (which would have originally been numbered page 15.) In the top half of the cut page, one nephew comments, "This gets more like the fairy story every minute!" and the other two nephews offer theories (accurate ones) as to where the gold comes from and goes to. Scrooge says, "I don't care what CAUSES it! I'm going to be ready to CATCH it next time!" Panel 5 of the unpublished page has been cut out and is published as panel 1 of page 17. Panel 2 of published page 17 was drawn new to replace the other five panels. In these five panels, Scrooge says he's cured, Donald and the kids decide they are not needed, and Scrooge suggests that they might want to get back to Duckburg, where they would have a better chance of raising the five dollars they need. This art was cut from the story by Barks and consigned to his scrap pile.

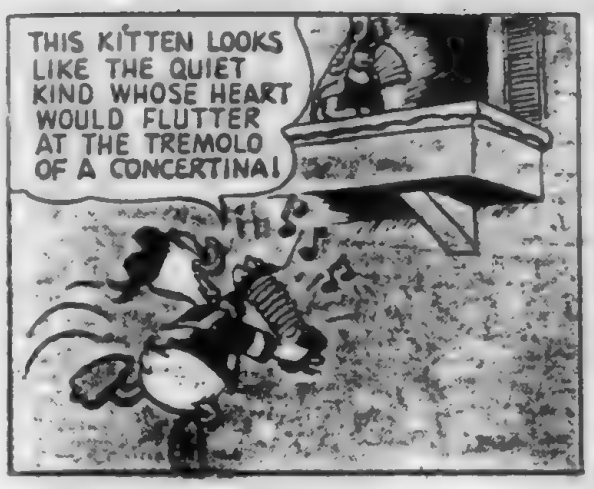
From "That's No Fable" in *Uncle Scrooge* No. 32 (1960), there exist two panels excised from page 5 and replaced by the present panels 5 and 6 of that page. In the original, the two boys are only described; in the revision they are shown.

In a letter to a correspondent dated March 24, 1961, Barks mentions cuts in the then-current issues of *Scrooge* and *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*. One story mentioned is "The Madcap Mariner" in *Walt Disney's* No. 247 (1961). Apparently page 9 was dropped. Barks wrote, "Naturally, the page that was lifted from the codfish story was the one with the best gags." Barks also expresses concern over "the grisliest butchery of all," the possibility that unless enough cuts could be made in other stories, that a page might be cut from "The Terrible Tourist" in No. 248 (1961). No cuts were made in that story, but a page's worth of panels was apparently cut from "Stranger than Fiction" in No. 249 (1961). It appears that the eight panels between page 8 panel 4 and page 9 panel 5 were cut from the 16 that should fit there. Such cuts were made to make way for ads, because at this time Dell had just raised its comic-book price to 15 cents and was having trouble with news dealers who were cutting off the top part of the covers, returning them for credit, and then selling the remainder of the comic for a dime. Needless to say, Barks was unhappy about the cuts but recognized that "it's a case of economics taking precedence over fantastics." In fact, he expressed concern that if other publishers didn't raise their prices, the ducks and Beagle Boys might fade into history. Considering the drop in circulation from then to now of 80 percent in some titles, he was very nearly right.

The other story mentioned is "Mythtic Mystery" in *Uncle Scrooge* No. 34 (1961). Barks' comments are worth quoting: "In the Valhalla story, the cuts were scattered around, but totaled the equivalent of 16 panels. My chin hit my knees when I saw that big half-page stupender I did of Thor and Vulcan and a nephew riding above the busiest street corner in Duckburg in the golden chariot missing. Thor's horses terrified, thousands (at least) of people gaping upward in disbelief. Autos bumper-to-bumper, smoking, clanking. In short, I gave Vulcan something to be scared about. All wasted effort." Reading through the story, breaks appear that seem to indicate excisions between page 6 and 7 and on page 11; the half page would probably go with page 14. These pages have not been seen, to the best of my knowledge, and may never be.

Barks' work records for October 1960 show that he did four covers and 32 interior pages for *Gyro Gearloose* No. 1184, which was published at about the same time as the three comics mentioned above. However, neither of the two editions of the comic contained all 36 pages. Three pages were apparently cut from the four stories in the issue. I suspect a half page preceding and another following page 3 of "Monsterville" were deleted. Another page may have been deleted in the vicinity of page 2 of "The Cube" and one more page is cut somewhere in the issue. In both editions, only 29 of the 32 pages of story were published. In the edition with advertisements, there are ads on the inside front cover, outside back cover, center two pages, and a half-page Donald Duck gag (not by Barks) and a half-page ad on page 32. In the edition with no ads, Gyro gags by Barks replace the two cover ads, two non-Barks Gyro gags replace the center page ad, and a full-page non-Barks Donald Duck gag appears on page 32. The reason for these cuts is the same as for the three comics mentioned above, although slightly more complicated, since there were editions both with and without ads. Dell had been publishing two (or more) editions of some comics for a number of years, dating back at least to the mid-1950s. The cuts in the edition with ads aren't hard to explain (running an edition *without* ads at this particular time is a little harder to explain). Replacing the center page and page 32 ads with gags probably meant changing one plate for part of the press run. To have one edition with ads and another with the whole 32-page interior as originally drawn would have required changing all plates. This art, like that for the three comics above, is probably permanently gone.

In "Jungle Bungle," in *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* No. 259 (1962), the title panel was revised following office suggestions. In the original splash panel, one of the nephews is holding a stick with a prune on it and the other two are standing next to him. They call to Donald, "All set, Unca Donald! See if you can shoot the PRUNE off this stick with your arrow!" Donald, in panel front right, replies, "Ha! A PRUNE! I could shoot a RAISIN at this easy distance!" The panel was presumably revised because it is extremely unsafe as originally drawn. As revised with the



HER OLD MAN LOOKS LIKE THE *ACTIVE* KIND, UNCA DONALD! LOOKOUT FOR HIS UPPERCUTS!
HE'S THE KIND WHO *NEEDS* SOME SERENADING AROUND THE PLACE!

nephews standing next to Donald as he aims at the stick, now stuck in the ground, there is no safety hazard.

According to Barks' work records, "Rug Riders in the Sky" in *Uncle Scrooge* No. 50 (1964), was written and drawn as a 17-page story. However, it was published as a 16-pager, so somewhere between the time Barks sent it in and the time it was published, a page was cut, probably to make way for an ad. Similarly, "How Green Was My Lettuce" in No. 51 (1964) had two pages cut, from 17 to 15 pages. In No. 50, I have no idea where the cuts were made. In No. 51, it seems possible that cuts may have been made around page 2 and page 6. To my knowledge these pages have never been seen.

In addition to pages cut from various stories, there are four stories that were completed by Barks but have never been published. The first of these stories was originally scheduled for the January 1946 (Christmas 1945) issue *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*, but it was rejected and returned to Barks, who was never paid for it. It was reportedly rejected for being sacriligous and un-Disney. Nine and a half pages of the story are still known to exist. The top half of page 1 was given away long ago and Barks does not remember to whom it was given. The story opens with Donald gushing over with an anachronistic Christmas spirit and he decides to "sally forth and sing carols" with the kids. The kids protest but to no avail. They go out and the neighbors are not in the least receptive and Donald gets pretty raw treatment from them. The carol singing begins on the bottom half of page 2. From here through the top of page 9 was redrawn, slightly rewritten and condensed and published as pages 3 (bottom) to 9 (bottom) of "The Terrible Tourist," *Walt Disney's* No. 248, May 1961. Some panels are exactly the same in the two stories. The changes include caroling to serenading the senoritas, winter to summer, Duckburg to Mexico, Neighbor Jones to the Duckburgian Consul, and other, more minor changes, but the gags and story lines are essentially the same. Neighbor Jones finally gives up and decides to "join (Donald) in a beautiful carol!" Jones gives Donald a gargle to remove the alum (rather than glue as in the later story) so he can sing again. The kids warn him not to trust Jones, but he pays no heed. Jones tells Donald, "I've got a sick friend up in the canyon that needs cheering up!" So they go off, but the friend's house is a half mile away across an impassable gully. Donald asks how they'll get there. Jones says "WE DON'T! You sing from HERE!" and he has a little gadget that'll help Donald sing real loud, an electrified baton (i.e., a cattle prod.) *"AND SO — FAR INTO THE NIGHT!"* Donald sings while Jones pokes him with the prod, saying, "Louder! Louder! I forgot to tell you that besides being sick, my friend is STONE DEAF! LOUDER!"

The second unpublished story by Barks is one he lists as "Golden Apples," a ten-pager submitted January 3, 1952, and planned for *Walt Disney's* No. 144. However, No. 144 carried the story originally scheduled for No. 145 (about spending Scrooge's money) and Barks' records note that the "Golden Apples" story must have been shelved. What has happened to this story is a mystery. As Barks remembers it, the story was a modern version of the myth of Atlanta and the golden apples, and was shelved because Daisy did not behave in a "ladylike manner" in the story.

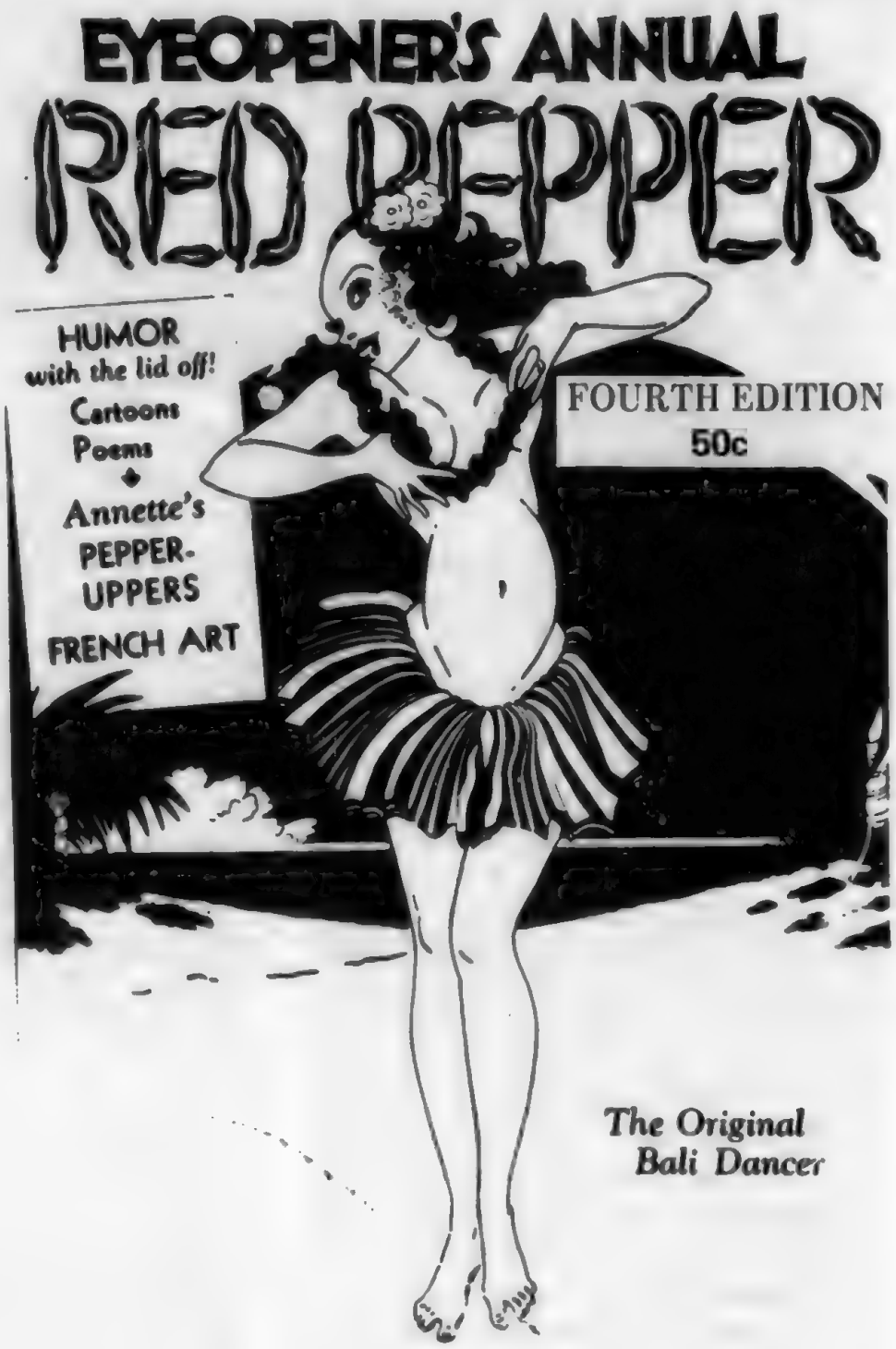
To continue in this unhappy vein, on December 15, 1955, Barks submitted a ten-page story for *Walt Disney's* listed as "Bobsled Race." I would guess that it was originally intended for No. 196 because it was submitted between the ten-pagers that actually did appear in No. 195 and No. 196 and, although Barks was at this time working a year ahead of cover date, the office had not yet started switching stories out of order. Barks writes on this entry, "Don't know what became of this story. Probably scrapped." No one has ever reported seeing it.

The fourth and last unpublished story is referred to as "the milkman story." Barks wrote and drew the story, mailed it in, and was paid for it, but for many years it just sat unpublished in the offices of Western Publishing Co. The original art for most of the story now resides in the Walt Disney Archives, and the story still has not been published. It concerns Donald's trials and tribulations as a milkman for the Daisy Dairy Company, and mostly with Mr. McSwine, Barks' standard pig villain. A large part of the story shows Donald in his (successful) efforts to be a perfect milkman, but each morning as he goes past apartment 505, McSwine, who wants Donald's job, pulls increasingly nasty dirty tricks on him and calls the company about Donald's supposedly wretched performance. Finally, he switches bottles with Donald, substituting his own bottle of watered milk. He calls the company, empties the bottle on Donald, and yells his accusation at the top of his lungs to the still sleeping neighbors. Donald finally loses his cool. The substitute bottle he had previously offered to McSwine in place of McSwine's own planted bottle of watered milk, he now gives to McSwine, right in the face, and slams the window down on his hands when McSwine grabs for him. Donald tells him, "I want you to sample our full line of superior dairy products!" as he ties a rope around the bottom of McSwine's night shirt. After Donald has had his revenge and left, McSwine calls the night boss and tells him what happened: "He filled my nightshirt full of YOGURT and ice-cold COTTAGE CHEESE! . . . Is he FIRED?" So Donald loses his job and McSwine goes down to find the hiring boss, and who is it? "YOU?" "Yes, ME! Thanks to you for phoning in complaints!" says Donald. "But I thought you'd be FIRED!" Donald counters: "You HOPED! But I was PROMOTED, instead! It seems the other 199 customers on my route thought I was such a perfect milkman I deserved a BETTER job! So YOU just don't live right, noisy boy!" And he picks up McSwine and throws him out. Barks' comment in his work records is that "this story was shelved because Donald was too mean to the villain."

END

The Unknown
CARL BARKS

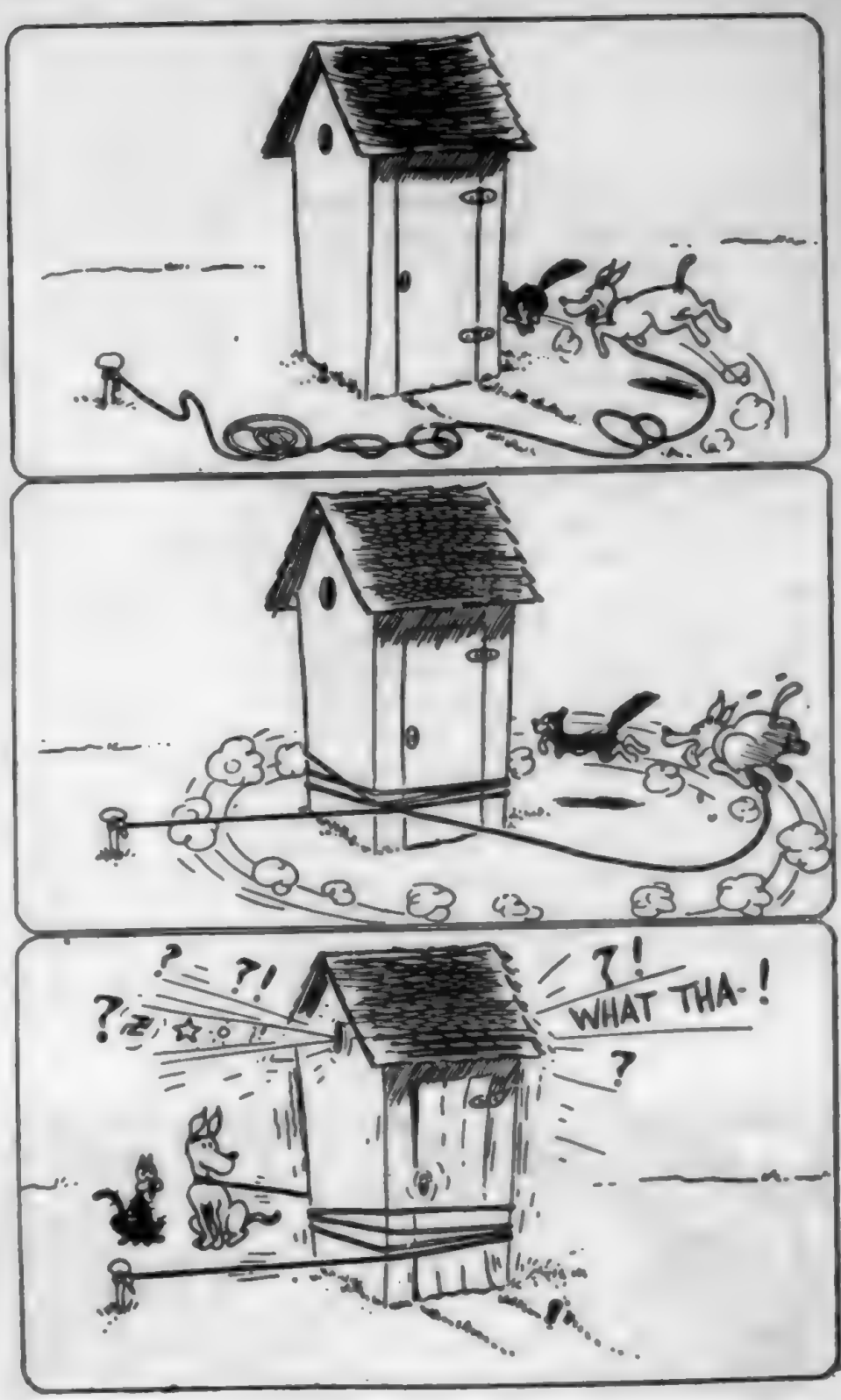
Carl Barks' fame rests on his comic-book work, but he was a cartoonist for many years before he began writing and drawing Disney comic books in 1942. He became interested in being a cartoonist while he was still a schoolboy, and took a correspondence-school course in cartooning in his teens. In 1918, he went to San Francisco to look for a job as a cartoonist, but it was not until 10 years later, when he was working in a railroad riveting gang, that he began selling cartoons to the humor magazines that flourished in the 1920s. After a few years as a free-lancer, he went to Minneapolis, where he worked as an artist and editor for the *Calgary Eye-Opener*, a "spicy" humor magazine of the time. The cartoons on these pages are from the *Eye-Opener* of 1933-35.



The Original Bali Dancer

"He used to belong to the bashfulest man"

WHY DO YOU WANT MABEL TAKEN OFF YOUR ARM?
TATTOOS PUT ON OR TOOK OFF- $3.00 PER.
SEE!
LOOK, MOMMA- A SHARK'S FIN!!
NO. NO. IKEY — DOT'S ONLY POPPA SVIMMINK ON HIS BACK -
VALTYSSON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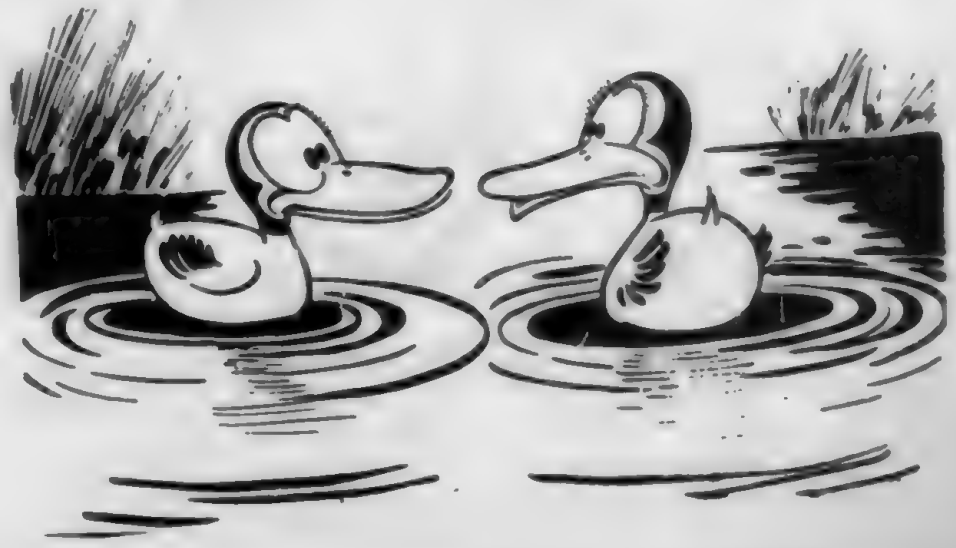
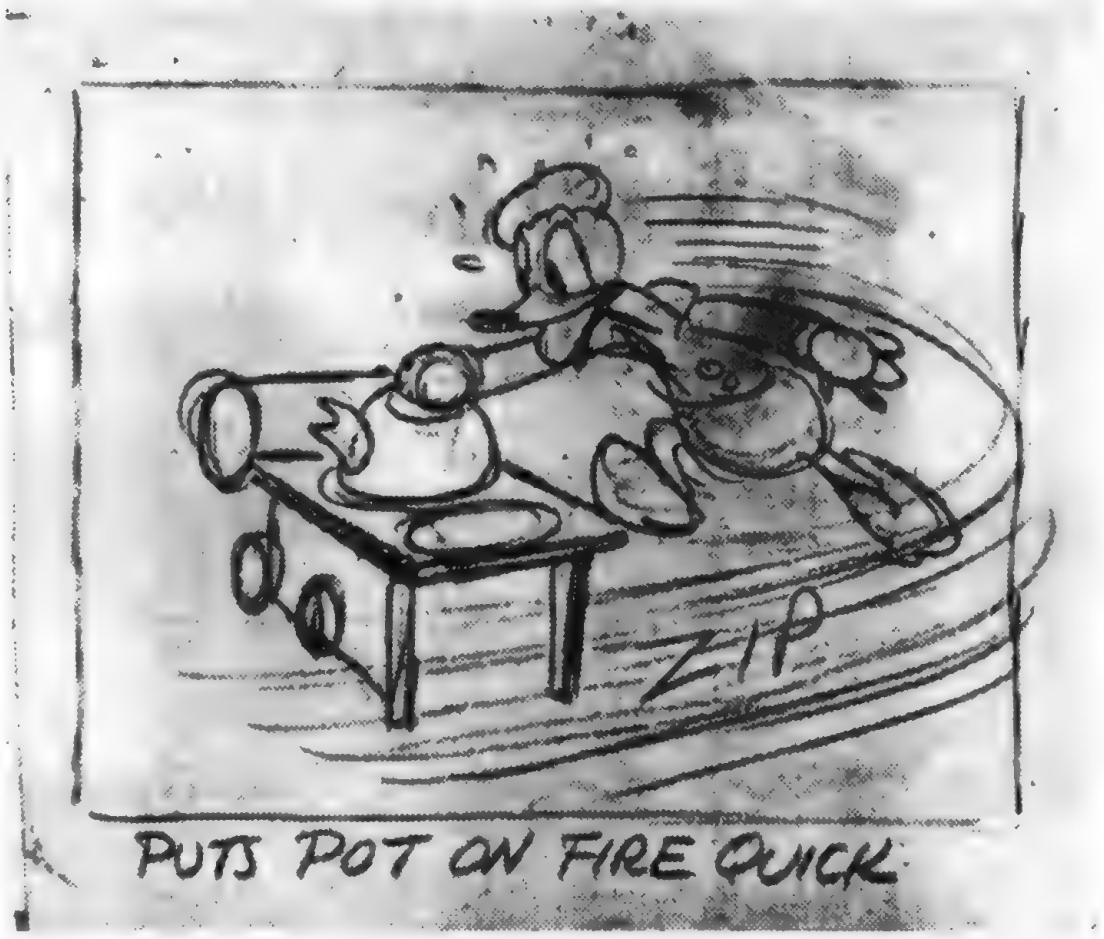
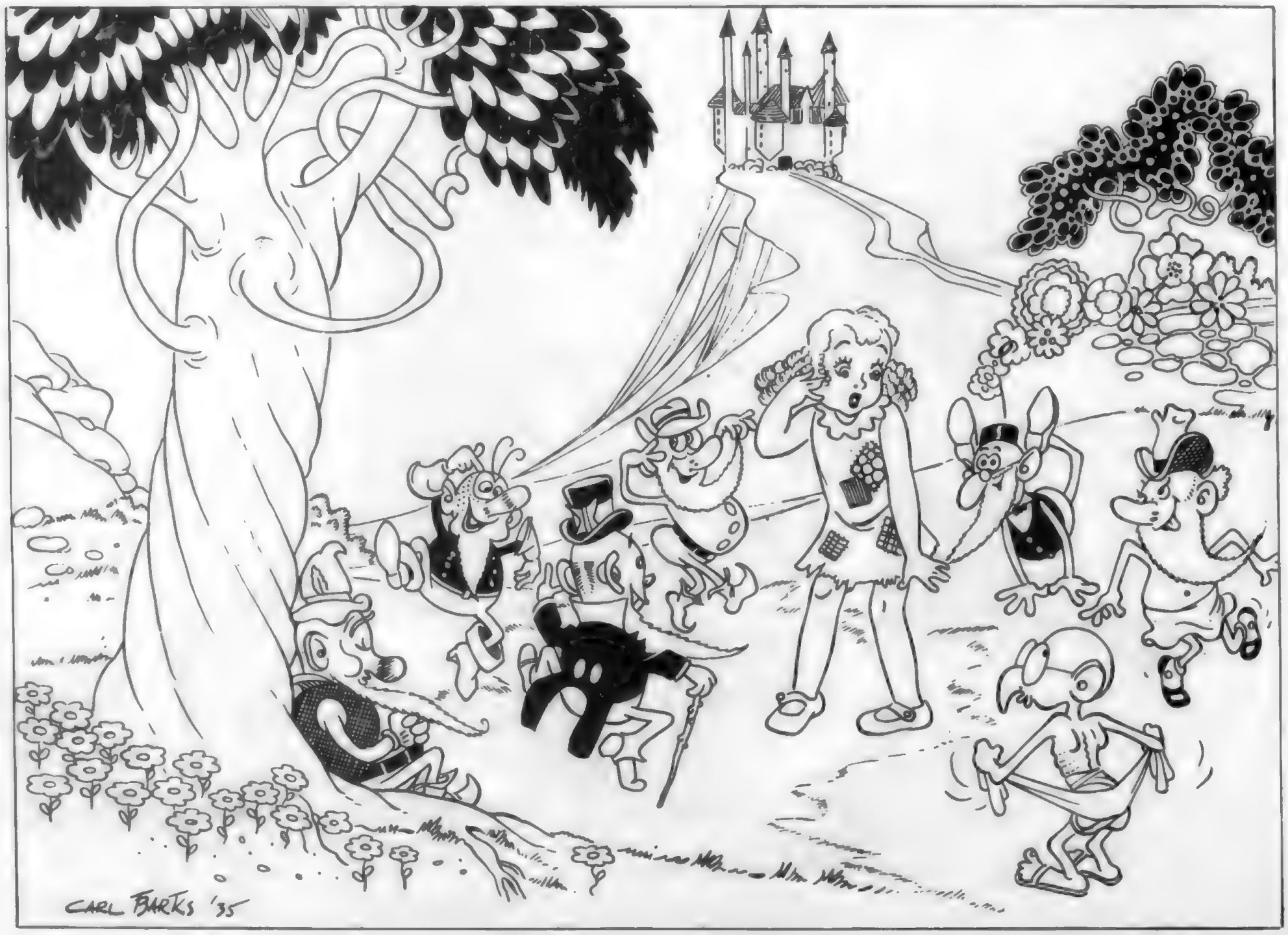


Barks started work at the Disney studio in November 1935 (Walt Kelly started there a month later). When he applied for a job with Disney, he submitted some drawings of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (the feature was then in the early stages of production) that were very different from what appeared on the screen. At the studio, Barks worked briefly as an in-betweener, but then he began submitting gags for the Disney short cartoons, and was recruited by the story department, where he remained until 1942. Barks worked on almost nothing but Donald Duck cartoons while a story man, roughing out story sketches like the one reproduced here. The Disney story men were a rowdy bunch, much inclined to draw sketches of one another as well as of the Disney characters. Some of the sketches of Barks by his fellow story men are included here.

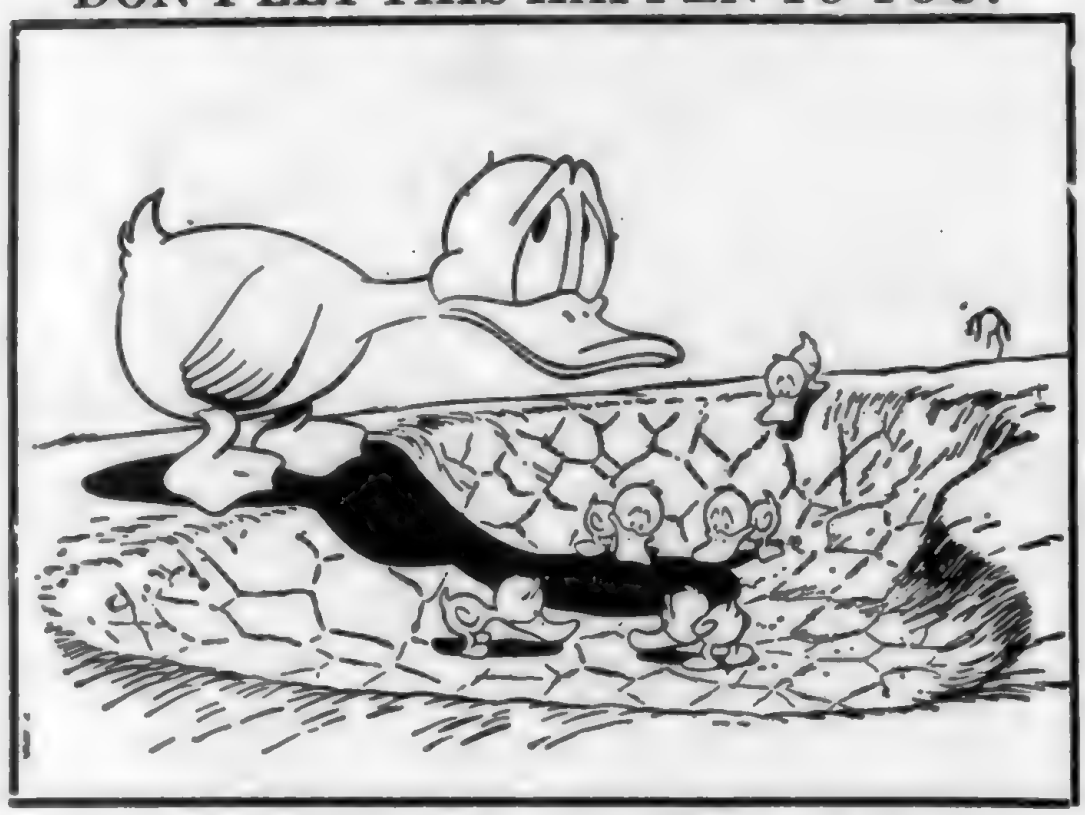




WELCOME
REEVES
COUCH
BARKS

THE
SVENGALI
OF
THE
3RD
ANNEX

While he worked for Disney, and then after he began doing comics stories, Barks still turned out a few cartoons on the side. Some of them are reproduced here. He contributed a few cartoons to the magazine *Flying and Popular Aviation* in the early Forties, but this sort of work fell off as Barks' load of comic-book stories steadily increased. Later, about the only outside work he did was for friends in the San Jacinto-Hemet area in southern California, where Barks lived for more than 25 years after leaving Disney's. He did cartoons pushing a water-bond drive in 1952, and advertising art for local businessmen. He was also hired in 1949 or 1950 to draw several political cartoons by a former resident of Hemet who was embroiled with the mayor of Palos Verdes, California, in a dispute over the legality of landing helicopters in the city. In the cartoons, the mayor was depicted as a top-hatted billy goat, standing in the way of progress, i.e., helicopters.



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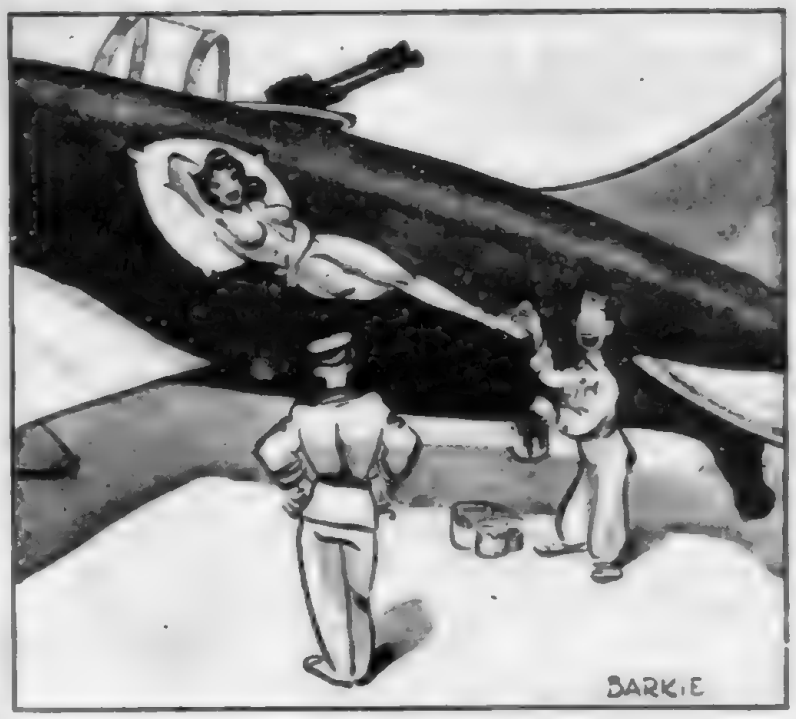
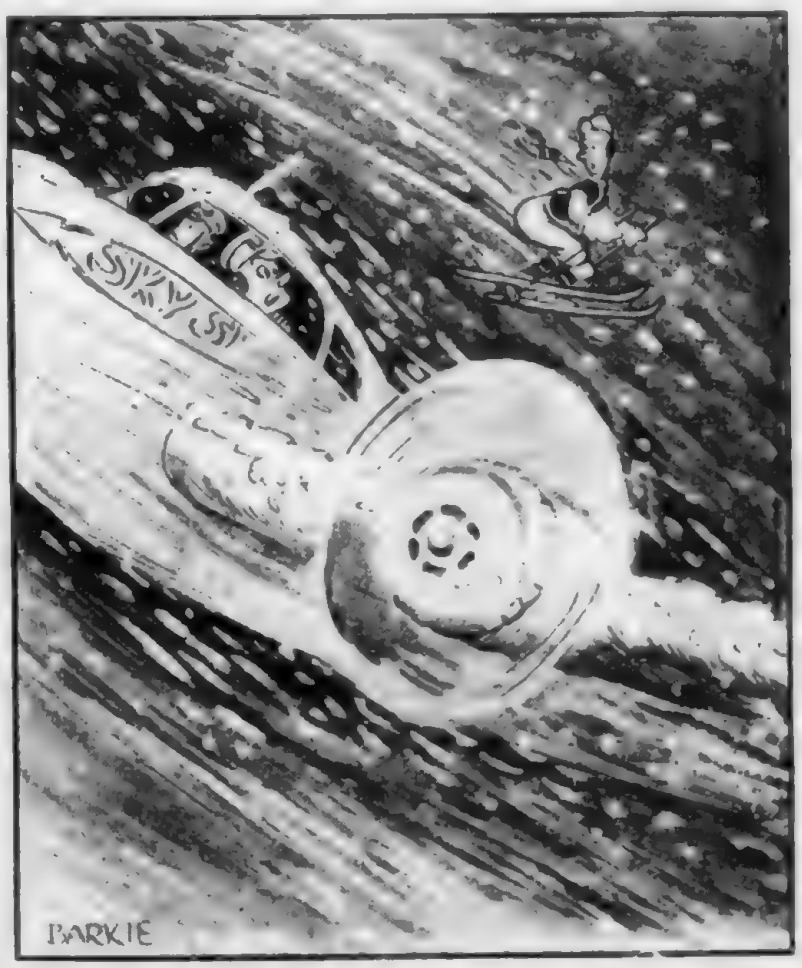


"... And when they fly up to get a close look, 'bango!' I'll let them have it! ..."



"I don't care what that altimeter says, we'd better climb."

"He says we don't go about our bombing efficiently. He'd like to give us some pointers he learned in the teamsters' war ..."

In the late Forties, Barks became concerned that his livelihood — the Donald Duck comic books — might fade away, leaving him in need of a new way to make a living. He began practicing drawing more realistic characters, and produced the studies reproduced on these pages. The nude studies, he said recently, were "just practicing, trying to get action into girlie poses. Some girlie poses are so trite, there's nothing new about the way they handle the figure. I was trying to make 'em a little more perky." All of these drawings date from around 1946 to 1950.

The Carl Barks Bibliography

Conclusion

This is the final installment of the Carl Barks bibliography that will appear in *Funnyworld*, but it is far from being the last of the bibliography itself. I've decided to cut off the bibliography — as published in this magazine — with Barks' work for Western Publishing Co. The complete bibliography will list, in addition, Barks' work for other sources, such as fan magazines, and it will also list articles and books about Barks. (There will be coverage of Barks' pre-comic book work, too, although not in so much detail.)

The publication of the complete bibliography was originally scheduled for 1974, but it has been bumped over into 1975 by the long delay in publication of this issue of *Funnyworld*. The contents of that volume are still taking shape, but there will be lots of material in addition to the expanded and revised bibliography itself. For one thing, I've recorded two interviews (a total of six hours) with Carl Barks since the last issue of *Funnyworld* appeared, and much of what he said — about his life and his work — will be in the book. With Carl's cooperation, I've also accumulated a lot of Barks-related illustrations for the book in the last few years; a few of those drawings are reproduced in this issue of *Funnyworld*.

I receive inquiries constantly about the complete bibliography from people wanting to know the price and the date of publication, and all I can say (when I have time to reply at all) is that I simply don't know yet. But you needn't worry. The publication of the complete bibliography will be widely advertised.

As before, I'd like to encourage readers to suggest any changes that they think would improve the bibliography, and to offer corrections when they see errors.

There's one change in this final segment of the bibliography. I've added dates in parentheses after each entry; these represent the dates on which Barks submitted his work to Western Publishing.

Mike Barrier

IV. GIVEAWAYS AND PREMIUMS

A. FIRESTONE CHRISTMAS GIVEAWAYS

Title changes: The first issue was titled *Firestone Presents Comics by Walt Disney*; the subsequent issues were titled *Donald and Mickey by Walt Disney*.

No number - 1943 - 20 pages

DONALD DUCK - 10 - *Reprinted* from *Walt Disney's Comics* No. 32, May 1943.

No number - undated, but almost certainly 1944 - 20 pages

DONALD DUCK - 10 - *Reprinted* from *Walt Disney's Comics* No. 35, August 1943.

No number - (December) 1945 - 20 pages

DONALD DUCK'S Best Christmas - 8 - Donald rents a horse and sleigh so that he and the nephews can take all their Christmas presents and food to Grandma's house. A storm comes up and they lose their way. They take refuge with a poor widow and her two children, and after they leave, Donald finds that the nephews have given the poor family all the presents and food. The ducks return home and find Grandma there, with presents and plenty of food. *(Aug. 31, 1945)*

No number - 1946 - 20 pages

DONALD DUCK in Santa's Stormy Visit - 8 - Donald and the nephews are tending a lighthouse on Christmas Eve, and Donald is planning to radio ashore for presents. However, an albatross who has taken refuge in the lighthouse wrecks the radio set. The ducks tie a message for Santa Claus around the albatross' neck and send him toward shore. The albatross' message is found by the skipper of an ocean liner, who sends a box of presents to the top of the lighthouse in a cargo sling. The next morning, when they find the albatross and the presents, the nephews are happy and Donald is mystified. *(Mar. 8, 1946)*

No number - (December) 1947 - 20 pages

DONALD DUCK in "Three Good Little Ducks" - 8 - The nephews, fearful that they've been too bad all year to get Christmas presents, try to make it up to Donald on Christmas Eve, but all of their efforts at good deeds backfire, and they finally leave home with packs over their shoulders. Donald finds them under a bridge and orders them home, where a tree and presents are waiting. *(Feb. 28, 1947)*

No number - (December) 1948 - 20 pages

DONALD DUCK in "Toyland" - 8 - The ducks are invited by Santa Claus to come to the North Pole and test his toys. Donald takes his lumps when the testing begins, but by the time Santa Claus comes to see the comments Donald has written down, Donald is so engrossed in playing with the toys that he has forgotten to record his impressions. *(Art and rewriting of script.) (July 8, 1948)*

No number - (December) 1949 - 20 pages

DONALD DUCK in "New Toys" - 8 - The nephews' Christmas list includes a new tricycle, a new scooter and a new coaster wagon, but they already have one of each, and Donald tells them not to expect new toys until their old ones are worn out. The nephews decide to earn the money to buy themselves new toys, but their old toys are wrecked in the process. Donald buys the nephews new toys anyway, but the nephews give them to three poor children and get to work repairing their old toys in Donald's new basement workshop. *(July 7, 1949)*

B. BOYS' AND GIRLS' MARCH OF COMICS

No number, but fourth in the series - 1947 - 32 pages

DONALD DUCK in "Maharajah Donald" - 28 - The nephews, starting with a pencil stub, trade up to a steamship ticket to India, which Donald commandeers from them. The nephews stow away on the ship, but are discovered. An Indian nobleman, the Maharajah of Hoopadoola, offers to supply passports for the nephews if the ducks will come to his

palace and help him swing a "diplomatic deal." The Maharajah sends the ducks riding on an old elephant that takes them to the neighboring kingdom of Bumpay. Donald learns when he reaches the capital of Bumpay that he is riding a sacred elephant and is now Maharajah of Bumpay. Bumpay must pay the Maharajah of Hoopadoola either 100 pounds of diamonds or 50 square miles of choice tiger-hunting land each year — and it must pay the land unless the Maharajah of Bumpay weighs as much as the diamonds. Donald will be fed to the tigers if he does not weigh enough. Donald fails the test, but the nephews use their trading skills to garner 500 pounds of cat food, and the royal tigers are too stuffed to be interested in Donald when the time comes for him to be fed to them. *(Aug. 13, 1946)*

DONALD DUCK in The Peaceful Hills - 2 - Donald eschews seeing a cowboy movie with the nephews to take a walk in the snow-covered and peaceful hills, but changes his mind after tangling with a bear and an eagle. *(Oct. 4, 1946)*

20 - 1948 - 24 pages

DONALD DUCK in "Darkest Africa" - 22 - Donald, an aggressive butterfly collector, is hired by Sir Gnatbugg-Mothley to go to Africa and bring back an Almostus Extinctus, rarest of butterflies. In Africa, the ducks are sabotaged by Professor Argus McFiendy, who is also after the Almostus Extinctus, and Donald is forced to yield up the butterfly when the nephews are captured by cannibals hired by McFiendy. The ducks rout the professor — and regain their butterfly — by stampeding a herd of elephants out of a valley and across a river on which McFiendy is paddling. On the ship heading back home, the despondent McFiendy is about to throw himself overboard when he is surrounded by Almostus Extinctuses, which used to be the caterpillars that the nephews had brought with them from Africa. *(Sept. 26, 1947)*

41 - 1949 - 24 pages

DONALD DUCK in "Race to the South Seas!" - 22 - Uncle Scrooge, through his lawyer, gives both Gladstone and Donald sailing ships, and just a few minutes later they learn that Scrooge has been lost in a storm in the South Seas. Both Donald and Gladstone set sail for the islands where Scrooge was last seen, and along the way, Gladstone has nothing but good luck and Donald has nothing but bad. Gladstone reaches Scrooge first, but Scrooge is not "lost" at all; he has set up a hideout so that he can run his business without seeing any of his relatives. As the happy Donald and the nephews listen, an angry Scrooge vows to cut Gladstone out of his will. *(Dec. 15, 1948)*

C. DISNEY CHEERIOS PREMIUMS

Y1 - 1947 - 32 pages

DONALD DUCK's Atom Bomb - 30 - Donald invents an "atom bomb" that goes "fut" instead of "boom," and two professors are summoned to inspect Donald's handiwork. One of them, Professor Sleezy, a foreign expert, steals the bomb; he accidentally lights it, and it explodes. Its rays sweep the city, disintegrating the hair on humans, dogs and fur coats. Sleezy is arrested for cutting hair without a license. Donald decides to give up atom bombs and turns to selling "atomic hair-grower." *(Sept. 9, 1946)*

Format: The giveaways in this series are only a quarter the size of normal comic books; they are the same width as full-size comics, but only one-fourth as deep, so that each page contains a single row of panels.

Walt Disney presents
Donald Duck's Best Christmas
JINGLE BELLS! JINGLE BELLS! JINGLE ALL THE WAY!
TOMORROW IS CHRISTMAS, UNCA' DONALD!
ARE WE GOING TO CELEBRATE AT HOME?
NOPE! I HAVE A BETTER PLAN!
SEE THIS CARD FROM THE LIVERY STABLE? IT GIVES ME BIG IDEAS!
I'LL RENT A HORSE AND SLEIGH, AND WE'LL ALL DRIVE OVER TO GRANDMA'S HOUSE!
GEE! THAT'S SWELL!
PACK ALL OF YOUR PRESENTS IN BAGS, SO WE CAN STOW THEM IN THE SLEIGH!
WHAT ABOUT THE TURKEY AND STUFF?
PACK THE TURKEY, TOO! WE'LL TAKE EVERYTHING TO GRANDMA'S AND CELEBRATE THERE!
DONALD RETURNS WITH THE SLEIGH, AND SOON THE HAPPY DUCKS ARE READY FOR THEIR DRIVE!
THIS IS GOING TO BE THE BEST CHRISTMAS WE EVER HAD!
THERE'S A STORM COMING, BUT WE'LL BE SAFE AT GRANDMA'S BEFORE THE FIRST FLAKE FALLS!
OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS TO GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE WE GO —

Copyright © Walt Disney Productions

D. PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC GIVEAWAYS

(No number) - 1954 - 8 pages

DONALD DUCK Tells about Kites - 8 - In a series of comic episodes, Donald teaches the nephews the eight rules of safe kite flying. *(Art only.) (June 17, 1954)*

V. OTHER COMICS MATERIAL

A. BETTER LITTLE BOOKS AND NEW BETTER LITTLE BOOKS

Barks did no original work for the Better Little Books; his comic-book work was reprinted in them. In some books (identified as "All Picture Comics"), his comic-book panels were reprinted one to a page, trimmed as necessary, and some panels were deleted. In other books, the dialogue was deleted from the reprinted panels and the panels were printed on pages facing a page of text, in what is considered the standard Better Little Book format. Better Little Books, successors to the Big Little Books of the 1930s, were approximately four and a half inches square and three and a half inches thick, although their thickness varied over the years. The New Better Little Books were approximately five and a half inches tall and three and one-eighth inches wide, with fewer pages than their predecessors. Their format also differed, in that the comics panels and text were printed together on each page, instead of on facing pages. In the following list, the title, number and date of the Better or New Better Little Book is followed by information about the Barks reprints that each book contains.

Porky Pig and His Gang - Better Little Book 1404 (1946) - All Pictures Comics - Part of the book is reprinted from "Porky

WALT DISNEY PRESENTS
Donald Duck
IN
"MAHARAJAH DONALD"
COME HERE, KIDS! I WANT YOU TO CLEAN OUT THIS GARAGE!
WHEN YOU'VE FINISHED, I'LL GIVE YOU ANY OF THE JUNK I DON'T WANT TO KEEP!
THEY WORK REAL HARD WHEN THEY THINK THEY'RE GOING TO GET PAID!
LATER!
THERE! THAT WAS A REAL JOB!
I'M TIRED!
UNCA' DONALD, WE HAVE THE STUFF ALL PILED OUT HERE!
UM! I GUESS I'LL KEEP THIS OLD RADIO!
THIS SLEEPING BAG IS STILL GOOD, AND THESE GLOVES — I'LL KEEP THEM, TOO!
Copyright © Walt Disney Productions

Pig in 'Porky of the Mounties' " in *Porky Pig* Four Color No. 48 (1944).

Donald Duck and Ghost Morgan's Treasure - Better Little Book 1411 (1946) - All Pictures Comics - Reprinted from "Donald Duck Finds Pirate's Gold" in *Donald Duck* Four Color No. 9 (1942).

Donald Duck and the Green Serpent - Better Little Book 1432 (1947) - All Pictures Comics - Reprinted from "Donald Duck in 'The Terror of the River!' " in *Donald Duck* Four Color No. 108 (1946) and "Donald Duck" in *Walt Disney's Comics* No. 53, February 1945.

Donald Duck Lays Down the Law - Better Little Book 1449 (1948) - Reprinted from the "Donald Duck" stories in *Walt Disney's Comics* No. 56, May 1945; No. 54, March 1945; No. 70, July 1946; No. 58, July 1945; No. 60, September 1945; No. 50, November 1944; No. 69, June 1946.

Donald Duck in Volcano Valley - Better Little Book 1457 (1949) - Reprinted from "Donald Duck in 'Volcano Valley' " in *Donald Duck* Four Color No. 147 (1947).

Donald Duck and the Mystery of the Double X - New Better Little Book 705-10 (1949) - Reprinted from "Donald Duck in 'Sheriff of Bullet Valley' " in *Donald Duck* Four Color No. 199 (1948).

B. OTHER CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Donald Duck and the Boys - Whitman book, No. 845 (1948) - A book similar to the Better Little Books, in that each page of text faces an illustration, but with these differences: The pages are slightly larger (five and one-quarter inches wide and five and five-eighths inches tall), the book has only 96 pages (plus covers), and red ink is spotted on many of the pages. The story is a retelling in text form (written by someone other than Barks) of the "Donald Duck" story by Barks in *Walt Disney's Comics* No. 74, November 1946, with 48 new illustrations by Barks, based on his original comic-book panels. *(Dec. 11, 1946)*

Uncle Scrooge the Lemonade King - Top Top Tales No. 2465 (1960) - 28 pages, plus covers - Barks did the pencil roughs for this story, which consists of very little text and many colored illustrations; the coloring was added by someone else. In addition to the 28 pages of the story itself, Barks did the roughs for the front cover and for the illustration used for the inside front and back covers. This is the only book for which Barks received any author credit during his tenure with Western Publishing Co.; the title page includes the credit line, "Pictures by Carl Barks and Norman McGary." *(Oct. 17, 1959)*

Donald Duck and the Christmas Carol - Little Golden Book D84 (1960) - 24 pages, plus covers - Barks did the pencil roughs for the interior pages only; color was then applied by another artist. At least two slightly different editions of this book exist: (1) The original edition, whose price was 25 cents, includes a Christmas tree in the background of the front cover; the "Little Golden Book" line is at the top of the cover. (2) The second edition has no Christmas tree in the background, and the "Little Golden Book" line has been moved to the bottom of the front cover; the price is 29 cents. The back covers of the two editions contain different advertising matter for other Golden Books, and the inside covers also differ in various respects. *(Nov. 28, 1958)*

Donald Duck - Whitman Comic Book No. 8 (1962) - 140 pages, plus covers - This book reprints (in black and white, except for blue spotted on the title pages of stories) most of the contents of *Walt Disney's Comics* Nos. 209-213, February 1958 through June 1958, including the "Donald Duck" stories by Barks in each issue.

C. COLORING BOOKS

Uncle Scrooge Coloring Book - Watkins Strathmore No. 1883-6 (probably 1966) - The cover is reprinted from the front cover of *Uncle Scrooge* No. 43, July 1963.

Walt Disney's Coloring Book - Watkins Strathmore No. 1878-3 (probably 1966) - The front cover is reprinted from the front cover of *Walt Disney's Comics* No. 301, October 1965.

Working for the Fleischers

An Interview with Dick Huemer

Dick Huemer made his deepest mark on animated cartoons in the late Thirties and early Forties, when he was story director for such Walt Disney features as Fantasia *and* Dumbo. *Dumbo in particular owes a great deal to Huemer and Joe Grant, who shared story direction with him on many Disney projects. But Huemer had already seen — and made — a lot of animation history before he joined the Disney studio. He started in animation in 1916, animating* Mutt and Jeff *cartoons for Raoul Barre, and worked for Max and Dave Fleischer off and on during the Twenties. Later, he directed cartoons for Charles Mintz, before joining Disney's staff. With Disney, he animated on many cartoons before becoming a director of shorts (he directed the first cartoon in which Goofy starred,* Goofy and Wilbur*) and then a story director on features.*

Joe Adamson recorded six interviews with Huemer in 1968 and 1969, as part of the American Film Institute/University of California at Los Angeles Oral History program. The interview that follows is an excerpt from that Oral History, heavily edited and with additions by Huemer. In this excerpt, Huemer discusses his work in the Twenties and early Thirties, when he was associated first with the Fleischers and then with Charles Mintz.

Another excerpt from the Oral History, dealing with Huemer's earliest work in animation, was published in the summer 1974 issue of AFI Report, *the magazine of the American Film Institute. Copies can be ordered for $1.50 from AFI, Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C. 20566.*

Joe Adamson is the author of a current book on the Marx brothers (Groucho, Harpo, Chico and Sometimes Zeppo) *and a forthcoming book on Tex Avery, as well as being a prize-winning filmmaker* (Political Cartoon).

Adamson: When did you start working for the Fleischers?

Huemer: Around 1923.

Adamson: Is this after *Mutt and Jeff*?

Huemer: Yes. But I must have had other jobs. After all, I was still an artist. I could decorate lampshades, do commercial art.

When I came to work for the Fleischers, Doc Crandall was their only animator. He used to do the rotoscope, as well as other bits of animation.

Adamson: There were only two of you, then, when you started with Fleischer?

Huemer: No, Burt Gillett had gotten there just before me, and he got me in. He had been sort of a shop foreman at *Mutt and Jeff*. He was head man for a while, ran the place. When it changed hands, after both Barre and Bowers were out, Gillett ran it for the Jefferson Film Corporation. So when he left that place he went to the Fleischers, then he got me in there. It was a very small staff. I don't think there were more than about six people on the staff.

Adamson: The whole thing? Including inkers and painters and cameramen?

Huemer: Yes. Something like that. Say ten at the most.

Adamson: Not even as big as Barre's place, then.

Huemer: No, it was very small, a very cozy cluttered little place. They were on the basement floor of an old brownstone building on 45th Street right off Lexington Avenue.

Adamson: They were more or less leading the field at the time, weren't they?

Huemer: No, Terry was already doing well. But actually he was the only one we considered serious competition and perhaps as having a slight edge on everybody else.

The Fleischers were doing *Out of the Inkwell*. Koko the Clown and Max were the main characters. Then we introduced other characters as protagonists. For example, once we took Koko to Mars, and he had Martians to contend with. Those *Inkwells* were actually quite good cartoons, I still believe. They were definitely to my mind a step above the *Mutt and Jeffs*. They had better stories for one thing.

Adamson: Were the animators still making up their own gags, or did you have a little bit more supervision?

Huemer: As I recall, I would work with Dave Fleischer. Max, of course, acted in all the pictures and had overall say in production. His brother Dave was more or less the director of the cartoon operation. We'd get together and talk about what to animate. The studio, you see, was so small that you could walk from desk to desk. Not like the Disney studio became, full of rooms, and where nobody ever sees anybody or talks to anybody. Then, I could yell across the room, "Hey, Dave. I want to talk to you. Suppose we do this." And then we'd sit down and talk it over and laugh our heads off at our great gags, and then it would be my job to animate what we had threshed out. But, of course, we always had a basic theme. Generally quite clever. Did you ever see the one about the fly? That's the surviving *Inkwell* that you see around a lot. A fly is bothering Max; gags, complications, et cetera, et cetera. Take it from there. All in all, it was very relaxed working with the Fleischers.

There was a funny non-productive incident that started when I drew great big teeth on Koko, something the Fleischers never had done up to that time. Well, Dave started kidding me about it, baring his teeth at me every time I looked at him. Or he would draw an enormous tooth on my drawing paper when my back was turned. Then finally one night on my way home, I put my hand into my pocket and fished out a handful of teeth. Human ones. He'd gotten them from a dentist friend of his. I forget what my next move was — probably slipping one or two into his dessert at lunch, or some other disgusting thing. And then came the morning when I raised my drawing board to switch on the light and my hand touched something slimy. There, draped over the light bulb, was the lower half of a cow's jaw, replete with great big yellow teeth and shreds of unhealthy-looking flesh. Naturally I couldn't let him quit while he was ahead. So I sneaked down to the street when he wasn't looking and placed the cadaver on the motor of his Ford. I was only sorry I wasn't there when he started to smell roast beef on his way home. That kind of ended the whole rib. Neither of us could find a topper after that. Although 30 years later, when I met Dave accidentally in a theatre lobby, the first thing he did was to make big teeth at me and look distressed.

Adamson: How big a part did Max play in these cartoons?

Huemer: He would always open the picture, then in some trick manner the clown would come out of the inkwell.

Max would take the cork off the inkwell, or other cleverer ways, then Koko'd be loose, and he'd play against Max. He'd squirt ink at him, whatever the gags were. Then in the end he always dove back into the inkwell, and Max put the cork back on. A sort of circular effect, to complete the thing.

Adamson: What function did Max have in the creation of the cartoons?

Huemer: He had been the one to create the *Inkwell* series while he was with Bray. He even animated the early ones. Later on, he didn't mix in much in the cartoon production. I think brother Dave carried that on for the most part. Nevertheless, Max was there to render final opinions and decisions and as president to run the company. After all, it had grown and he always had ideas on expansion. He formed live-action companies. He bought French films. And he started Red Seal Film Corporation to release this product. For a while he was doing, unsuccessfully I'm afraid, what Disney finally did very successfully — releasing his own product. His wasn't successful for the reason that in establishing and maintaining these releasing agencies and booking offices, he paid out more than he took in from the films. Anyway, it just didn't work out. That's the story as I understand it.

Dave Fleischer, drawn for Funnyworld *by Dick Huemer.*

Adamson: He spent most of his time in the front office and as an actor.

Huemer: I never saw him much in the drawing rooms. I mean actively participating. Dave took over that chore. Dave handled it. And very well. It was fun working with Dave.

Adamson: When you say it was fun, do you mean . . .

Huemer: Dave had good ideas. We laughed a lot, and said, "Hey, that's funny!" Or, "Great! Why don't we do that." I guess that's how the business of cartoon creation is carried on.

Adamson: What would you say was the major reason for these cartoons being better than the others?

Huemer: They had more interesting ideas, for one thing. They had live action, which is instantly understandable to an audience, right away. There was Max, a live person whom they got to like after a while. Max was not a great actor or comedian, but at least, if you saw a few of his pictures, you got to know him, and you were sympathetic to his troubles. Another thing the Fleischers did was something they called rotoscope. Max used that right from the very start. Dave Fleischer would put on a clown suit, and they would photograph him in some wild action. And then they would take those films and project them and draw over them. A simple enough process, but it gave astonishingly lifelike action.

That would be only one little scene in each of the shorts. It was apparently too expensive to use more often. All the action had to be first shot, photographed, and projected, and then somebody would have to draw each frame. That is to say, somebody would have to change it to cartoon form, and somebody had to ink and fill in the blacks. All so that when completed it didn't look too different from the animation that was hand-drawn and not based on human photography.

Adamson: Did you do any of it?

Huemer: No, I never did any of it. That was purely mechanical. You only had to follow what was on the film.

Incidentally, McCay's animation was very lifelike, too, in some of his early cartoons, which was an amazing thing, because *he* didn't have rotoscope. He didn't base any of it on actual live action. He did a little cartoon about Nemo, which was very natural, some really

very beautiful lifelike animation and draftsmanship. It's surprising, because he did that so long before anybody else. And then in between his time and when Disney came along, there was a lot of raunchy-looking stuff — not good drawing or action either. McCay hit a high peak at the very start, after which quality went down and then surfaced again when Disney entered the picture.

Adamson: Winsor McCay didn't use the in-between system, did he? He would go straight from one drawing to the next.

Huemer: That's right. We found that out at a banquet we gave in 1928. It was the first Animators' Banquet, and he was the guest of honor.

Adamson: You didn't do this every year, did you?

Huemer: No, we were sort of discouraged, especially because after we were through the owner of the hotel said, "Raus! — and don't come back!" The last impression I have of the night of the brawl was somebody trying to high-kick the crystal chandelier. Anyway, during the after-dinner speaking McCay got up. He had a few under his belt, as we all did — there were only about 30 of us, that's about all there were in the business, in those days.

Adamson: McCay was a sober, timid sort of person, wasn't he?

Huemer: Well, he wasn't sober this night. Who was? He got up and he said, "Now I'm going to put you fellows wise to something that I've just discovered. Instead of working straight ahead, which makes it hard to know where you're going in animation, why don't you take drawing No. 1, and then look ahead and make drawing No. 5; and now look, you can put drawings No. 2, 3, and 4 right in between!" He was telling us about the in-between system! Of course, we respected him so much that nobody said, "Aw, come off it, we've been doing it since 1915." So that's how we know that he must have animated straight ahead.

Adamson: So you were doing the in-between system from the time you started?

Huemer: Oh, sure. And we wouldn't let anybody touch our in-betweens. We had no in-betweeners. It was pretty important that we did all this ourselves. It was too precious to let some jerk come in who maybe didn't know how to draw, and monkey with your stuff. As a matter of fact, for the record, in all modesty, I'm the first one to use in-betweeners. And it came about when I was working for the Fleischers. They — poor fellows — liked my work so well

Max Fleischer, drawn for Funnyworld *by Dick Huemer.*

that they said, "Why don't you do more of it? I mean by having someone do the in-betweens?" And my first impulse was "Oh, yeah? I will, like hell!" Then, being basically a very lazy fellow, I thought, "Why not?" So, Art Davis was assigned to me.

Adamson: Is in-betweening invariably tedious?

Huemer: Well, it's not the least creative. You don't dare be creative about in-betweening. The extremes create the action, the mood, or whatever you want to put over the point.

Adamson: Were you satisfied with Davis' work?

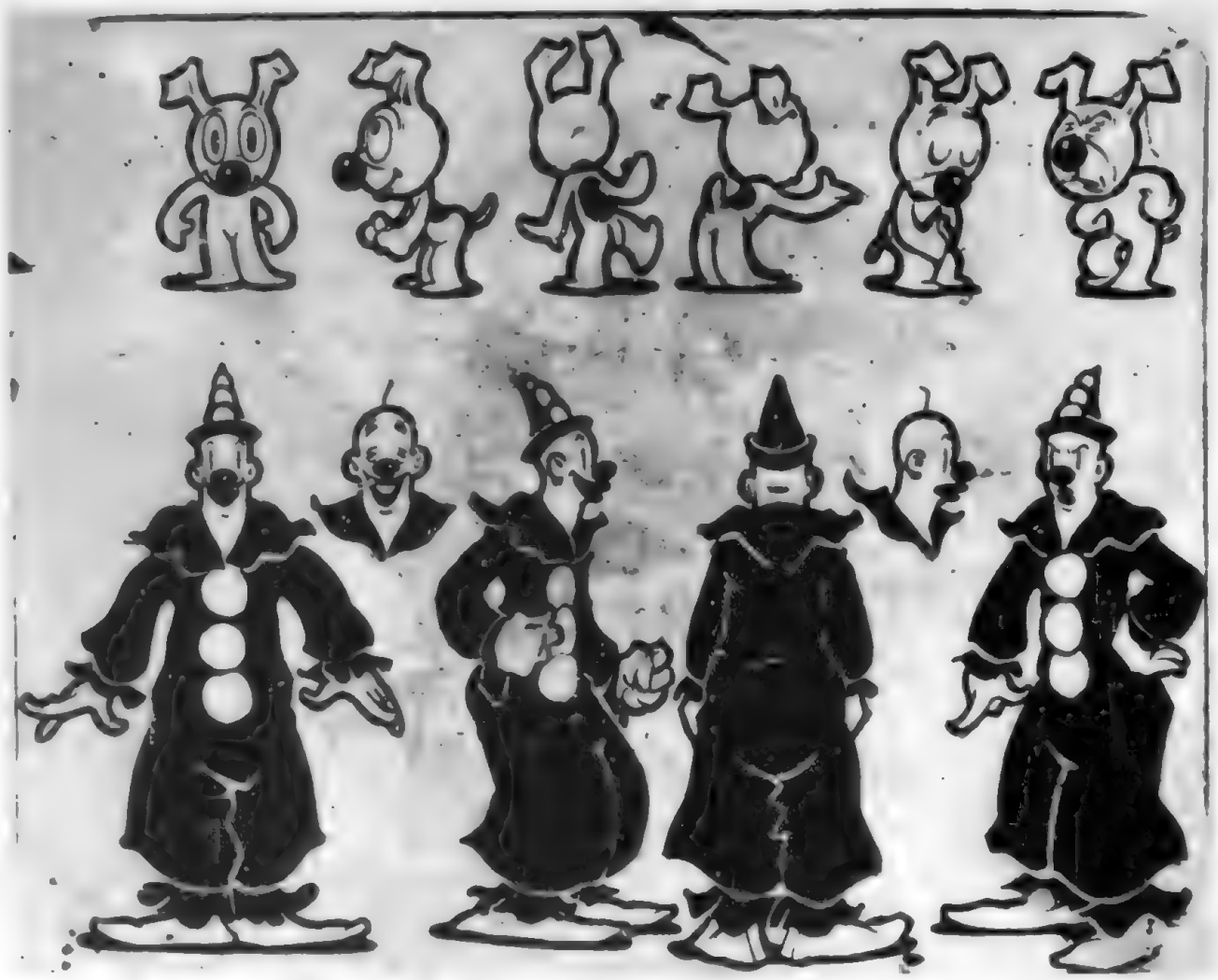
Huemer: Oh, fine. Didn't know the difference when the scene was run! In-betweening had been born!! *Ta-dee-ahh!*

Adamson: What percentage of the drawings did he end up doing?

Huemer: About 75. In those days, we exposed our own animation, right on the paper. We didn't even have exposure sheets. Made notations down in the corner. Suppose you had somebody repeating an action, you'd write, "R and R" — repeat and reverse — "five times stopping on 8," then you go ahead. Of course when sound came along, you had to have exposure sheets to give you the exact locations of sounds and notes, etc.

There is an amusing incident that explains how careful we were in drawing our things when we worked in pen and ink with Gillott pen points — they had to be Gillott's 290s, the famous English pen points, the kind Charles Dana Gibson used. Some guy was animating an explosion and he noodled up this drawing of smoke and things breaking, and all hell breaking loose, and he made such a beautiful drawing of one of these gorgeous in-betweens that he held it for five exposures, or six, a definite stop. He couldn't stand having the thing go through in one exposure, as it should have. Jesus! His work of art might have been missed! I could tell you his name, but he's a friend of mine.

Our inking techniques were very interesting, some guys were very good.



An early Fleischer model sheet for Koko the Clown and Bimbo the dog.

You'd put shading on whatever didn't move too much, if you wanted to. In preparation for photographing, we did the clown in the rip and slash system, which means cutting the papers out to fit over each other — like a puzzle. We used to noodle up closeups of the clown's head with shading all around the eyes, and everything. We used a very heavy outline in those days; very, very thick outline, all around the figure. That was because in the printing and developing of the film if we didn't have a heavy outline, it would very often bleed out. So it wasn't just an affectation, it was necessary to do it.

The Fleischers only used opaqued cels when the clown worked over a photograph. Say he was on the desk. Then he would be — as we do today — on an opaque cel. Of course, then he was just black and white; white-faced, black suit. Didn't use any grays that I can remember. Rotoscope was how they combined the cartoon with live action. First, they had a camera above and below a glass plate, with pegs; a projector was below that shooting up, and a camera was shooting down. First they made a matte of the clown. This was used for putting cartoon with live action, putting them on the same film.

They were a pretty inventive bunch, the Fleischers. The bouncing ball thing was invented by Max, that is, the idea of bouncing a ball on words. They got an old-fashioned washing machine, and lettered the lines of the song, white letters on black, and then tacked it on this round drum. Then they covered the whole thing in black, and when they turned the drum a line would come into the opening of a slit and go up, and then the next line would come. Then, they had a black pointer with a white dot on the end, so that when the line moved in — you never saw where it came from — then the pointer would go, dee-dee-dee-dee-dee-dee. You didn't see the pointer because it was black against black. You saw only the white ball; it looked as though the white ball was jumping from word to word.

Adamson: This wasn't an animated white ball?

Huemer: No, no! It was done this way, with a black pointer and a white ball on the bottom of it. Filmed in live action. The pointer doesn't photograph because it's black. They never let the pointer go in front of the letters. It was always above the letters. They'd knock it off in no time at all. The first one they made was called *Oh, Mabel,* which I animated. It was a song slightly popular at the time, it went: " 'Neath your window I am waiting, Oh, Mabel!" — something to that effect. I would pan the line in, and then there was a little figure jumping to accent each word to the end of the line and the figure would jump to the next line as it panned in. We'd turn words into funny appropriate objects or we'd explode words. Letters would drift down, grow, shrink, other characters would come in and chase them off. Anything. I didn't do the bouncing ball with the pointer gimmick. That was always the chorus. I just did the verse. The verse, as I told you, was always some animated figure that was appropriate, like "In the shade of the old apple tree," where the word might animate up into a tree. Everything was white on black, since they used negative prints. We'd have to draw a black face so that when it was reversed it would be a white face. Then the letters, also being black, would also, of course, come out white. It was all so successful that when they ran *Oh, Mabel* at the Circle Theater, in Columbus Circle, New York, it brought down the house, it stopped the show. They applauded and stamped and whistled into the following picture, which they finally stopped, and ran *Oh, Mabel* again, to the delight of the audience. I always say that was an indication of what sound would someday do for the animated cartoon, because it was basically a "sound" idea. The use of sound combined with action even though the audience supplied the sound, nevertheless, it partook of that feeling. They sang their little hearts out. It was very successful. With *Mutt and Jeff* we did something called *Sound Your A,* in which Mutt and Jeff appeared on the screen, and seemed to talk to Max Manny, the drummer of the Strand Theater, whose idea it was. He stood up in a spotlight in the orchestra, and he'd say, "Well, Mutt, how are things today?" And then the character would seem to look down at him, and a balloon would come up and say, "Fine." They played back and forth, and this, again, was, in a sense foreshadowing what sound would do someday. It was very, very successful. This was probably the most successful *Mutt and Jeff.*

Adamson: This was something like what McCay did with *Gertie the Dinosaur,* wasn't it?

Huemer: Exactly.

The Fleischers naturally joined the gold rush after Disney's stunning success with his first sound cartoons. Their own original method of synchronizing cartoon and sound was the invention of George Rufle, one of their animators. It consisted of photographing a bouncing ball, attached to the bottom of a baton which occupied the space at the left side of the film reserved normally for the sound track. In effect, this acted as a metronome and could be photographed to provide any desired beat, more particularly, the ones established and determined in advance by the anima-

tion itself. At the recording session, the musical director had only to watch the baton going up and down in the pre-empted sound track space and guide his orchestra accordingly. Musicians and vocalists also carefully watched the cartoon to add their sound effects and dialogues. It was the answer to previous and haphazard methods of synchronization such as having a flower which had nothing whatever to do with the action wag back and forth in the corner of the scene for the musical director to watch.

Adamson: Was there great similarity between your work and other animators' work? Or was the difference imperceptible enough, since they were using the same techniques?

Huemer: Within a picture, say there were three animators doing it, you would have to look very closely indeed to tell the difference in animators' drawings. But *you* could tell, instantly, whether it was a Terrytoon, or a Fleischer, or a *Mutt and Jeff*, or a *Felix the Cat*. At least I could, I imagine audiences could too, if they cared. Each series was stamped. They were individual. Always the same way of doing it.

Adamson: So that your work took on a different look when you changed studios.

Huemer: That's right. Even though you retained a little; you couldn't help doing things certain ways. But audiences were never aware of anything like that. Even to us there wasn't much. Of course, I knew my own work, I could tell mine in a minute. I saw an old *Mutt and Jeff* cartoon that I'd worked on, and I could readily recognize my own work. This short was one that was done when we had a little outfit called the Associated Animators. We were self-sustaining. All we would need would be the inkers and the painters of the cels — by this time most cartoons were done in the opaque system. We were the first cooperative in the animation business. There was myself, Burt Gillett, Ben Harrison, Manny Gould — and we decided to be both the owners and animators; we wouldn't need much of a staff; we would save all that money. Finally we went to Bud Fisher's attorney and secured the rights to do the *Mutt and Jeffs* again. They had lapsed for quite a while. We did a number of these, I saw one just the other day; it wasn't too bad. Incidentally, we couldn't make any money out of it. It wasn't a successful operation. Besides, I think *Mutt and Jeff* was fading away, and when Bud Fisher finally withdrew his financial support, that ended it. That was the finish of *Mutt and Jeff*. R.I.P. As for the associated animators, they each went their separate ways.

I went straight back to Fleischer's from there. Gillett went with Bowers, and Harrison and Gould went with Mintz.

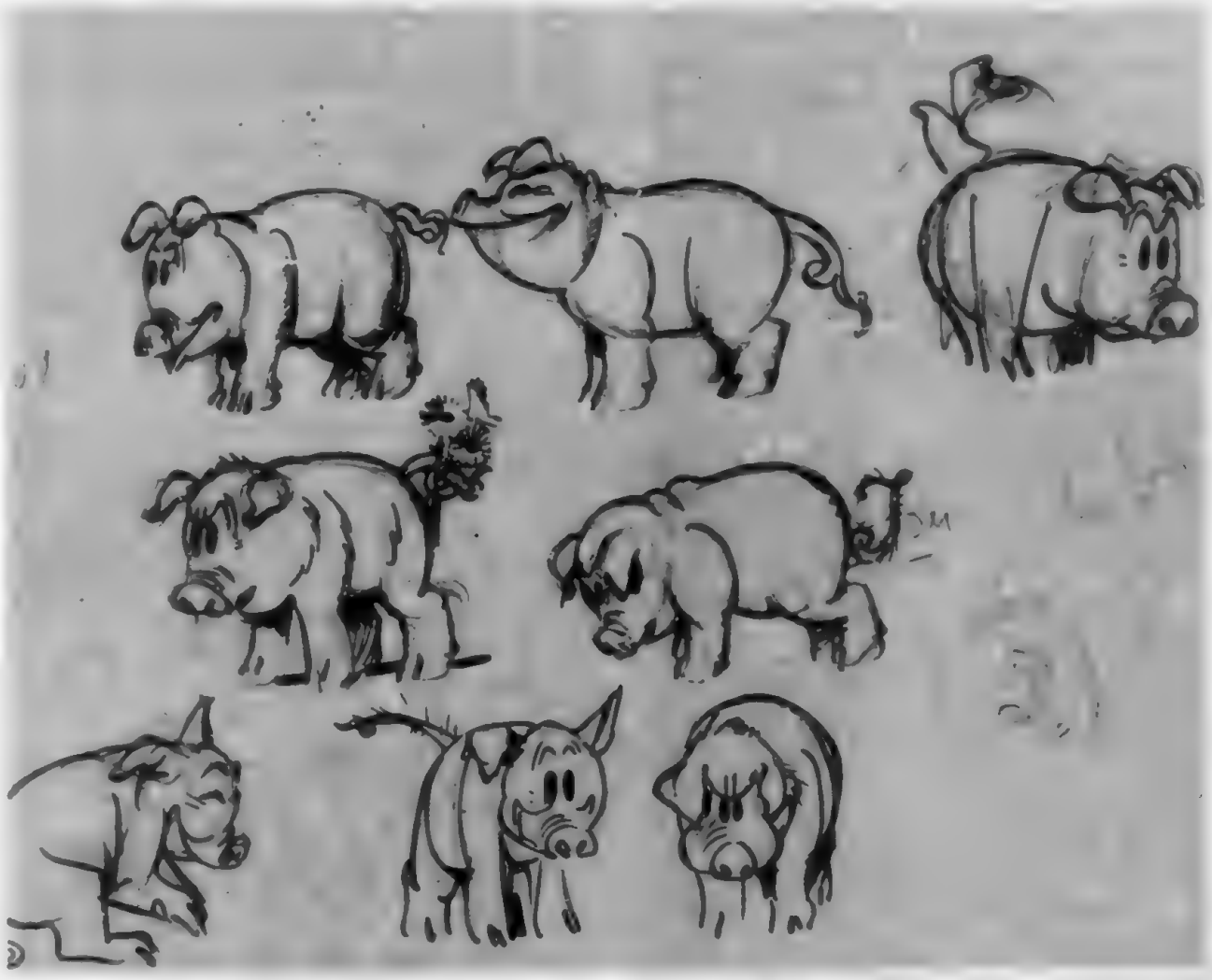
Soon the animation business began looking very shaky to me, and I decided to get out of it. I drew a comic strip called *Good-Time Guy* for the Metropolitan Newspaper service, which ran for about a year or two. It was a people-type strip. The guy who did *Ella Cinders*, Bill Conselman, wrote it, and I drew it. Well, that folded, too. Then I went back to the Fleischers once more. I was with them in 1929 when the stock market crash occurred. I can still hear it, crashing.

Adamson: Did this affect you very seriously?

Huemer: Not personally, no. I didn't own any stock. I didn't understand it. Who did? The animation industry looked awfully bad at that time too. Disney, of course, had already entered the field, and had done some Oswalds. They were far superior to anything anybody had done, in my estimation. And we — me, Harrison and Gould — used to go seek them out, find out where they were running and study them. And, bad as they look today — and I've seen them recently, and they are pretty bad — they were tremendously superior to our things. That was our opinion as craftsmen of the business. I was with Fleischer again when sound broke on the scene; and the *Skeleton Dance* took New York by storm, and naturally everything went to sound.

Adamson: You didn't stay with the Fleischers long after sound came in.

Huemer: Well, I was in and out of Fleischer's several times. I left to go into the Associated Animators. Then I came back again. Then I left to do my comic strip. Then I came back once more. And then I left to go with Charlie Mintz. The last time I left Max said, "All right now, this is the last time you're gonna leave!" He didn't really mean it. He was a lovely guy. I loved Max. He said, "That's a fine thing, leaving me ... but this is the last time you're gonna do it to me." Ben Sharpsteen had been touting me to Walt Disney. (There were only about 50 of us animators in the world, you know, and I was one of them.) And when Walt Disney came to New York on a business trip he looked me up with the idea of me coming to work for him. I invited him to dinner. He didn't know New York, and so I took him to a place called The Chili Villa, which even to this day I think served the finest Mex-



Albert Hurter became a legendary artist at the Disney studio, but long before that, he was an animator at the Mutt and Jeff *studio, where Dick Huemer worked for several years. Around 1920, Hurter drew this model sheet — probably one of the first model sheets — for a* Mutt and Jeff *cartoon. The great charm of Hurter's drawings, which was to flower in the Disney films, was already present in this little pig.*

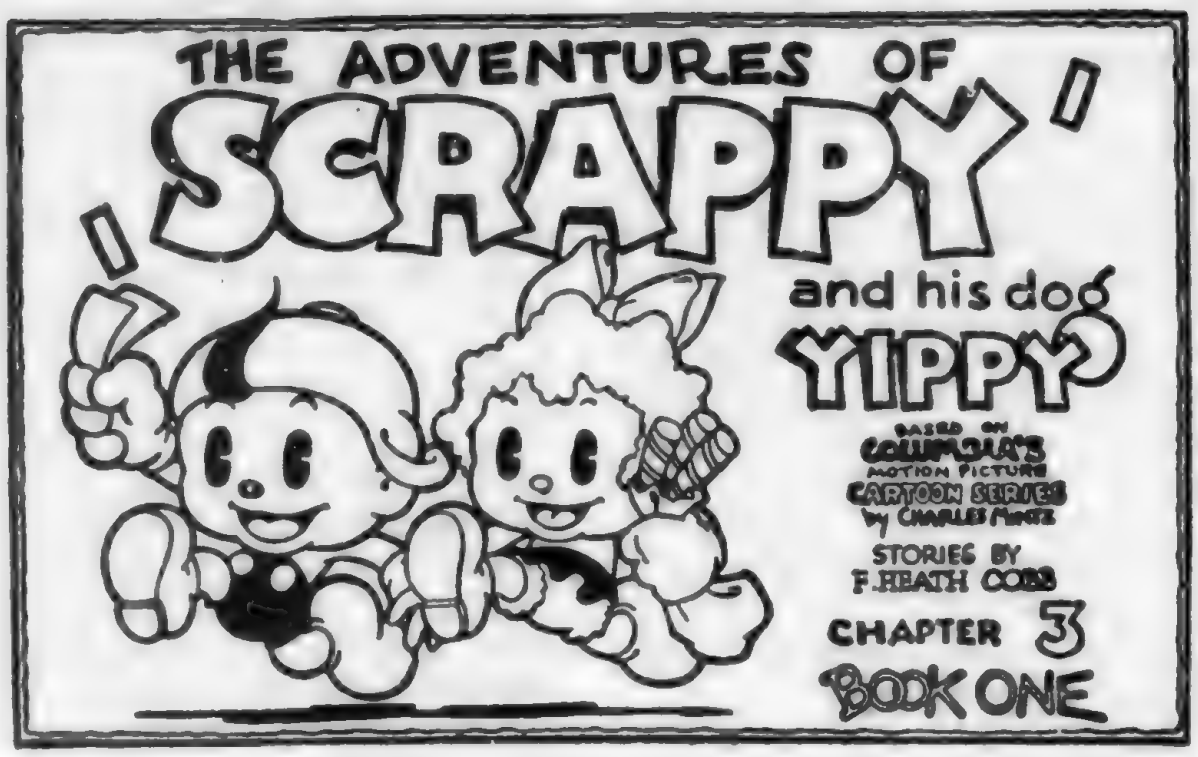
ican food I've ever eaten. Simply magnificent. I took Walt and his wife Lily there to talk things over. It was understood right away that I would consider working for him, even before we went to dinner. But I wasn't absolutely sure. He said, "Yes, let's talk anyway." So we went to Chili Villa on 45th Street. And all through the meal I don't think Walt addressed five words to me. He sat and brooded, and ate this heavenly food, and never said anything about how great it was, or much of anything else. So I spoke mostly to his wife. And I thought, "This is certainly a strange guy. I mean nobody has ever done this to me in my life." Well, later I found out that he was in very deep financial trouble, and was brooding. He had some serious setback. Something about the business end of his studio, I think. Obviously, that's why he'd come to New York. So that was my weird introduction to Walt Disney. I finally agreed to work for him, but a day later I got a better offer from Mintz and decided to take that. When I called Walt up and told him, there was silence for a while. Finally he said, "Well, okay, but you'll be very sorry." And I was. Because I should have gone with him right then and there. I would have had a better time, and I'd have enjoyed working in the business with a real genius. Although I must say the money he offered wasn't nearly comparable to what Mintz was going to pay me.

We did *Scrappy* and *Toby the Pup* for Mintz. The first series we did was *Toby the Pup*. Sort of a nondescript character. A little black beast, that walked on its hind legs, and had a big mop of black hair. A weird dog-like thing with long ears. I don't believe there are any of these still in existence.

Adamson: Was he sympathetic? Who created him?

Huemer: Sid Marcus created him. He and I came out to start the series. We had left Fleischer's together. And when Mintz moved his New York operation to California, we went along with him, and started *Toby the Pup*. Mintz also brought Harrison and Gould out here to continue *Krazy Kat*, which they had been doing. Both series ran concurrently.

Sid Marcus and I directed and did our own stories. But we also had to animate at the same time. Once we'd roughly laid the picture out, and timed it, why, there wasn't much else but to animate it. After all, we were still our best animators, certainly better than any neophytes we could then hire. Harrison and Gould did the same. They animated



most of their *Krazy Kats*.

Adamson: Did you have pre-recorded sound?

Huemer: Yes, occasionally.

Adamson: So, you were pretty sophisticated by this time.

Huemer: Yes, technically we were comparable to all the other studios. After I left Mintz, they went on for many years doing *Krazy Kat* and *Scrappy* mostly. So my leaving didn't ruin them.

Adamson: What did you think of what you turned out at this time?

Huemer: Not much. Some of the *Scrappys* were all right. But they didn't compare to Disney's cartoons. Let's put it that way.

I went with Mintz in 1930, and stayed until 1933. When Mintz tried to pare our salaries during the Depression we decided to strike. And so I left Mintz. But instead of going on strike, I went over to Disney's at last. I had greatly regretted turning him down, as he had predicted.

Adamson: Was there much difference in salary?

Huemer: There was quite a comedown in salary for me — almost half. Walt was not one for paying big salaries at that time. I'm sure he would have but he couldn't afford it.

Adamson: Mintz was?

Huemer: Mintz was, simply because I had the reputation of being one of the experienced men he would need to start a new project. He underpaid the rest of the staff as did everybody else, in those pre-union days.

Adamson: What was it like, working for Mintz?

Huemer: In some ways very agreeable. Sid and I as well as Harrison and Gould had complete freedom to animate whatever ideas came to us. You see, there were two kinds of producers in our business. There were the guys who had come up from the animation board and were therefore completely creative in a technical sense. Men like Disney, and the Fleischers, and Terry, and so forth. And then there were the businessmen and promoters who were conversant with the infighting tactics of the motion picture jungle. Men who knew how to wangle releases and take care of the headaches that more creative people find so hard to deal with. Mintz was such a promoter, and a damned competent one. So as long as we delivered on time and appeared to be doing a good job he left us pretty much alone. So I must say that besides the fact that I secretly kind of longed to go with Disney, my years with Charlie Mintz — if not artistically a triumph — were at least pleasant. **END**

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Comix on the Continent

A Survey by Patrick Rosenkranz

American underground comics have been written about at length in the pages of Funnyworld, *but their European counterparts have so far received little attention in any American publications. Patrick Rosenkranz, who wrote about the Berkeley comix con in the last issue of* Funnyworld, *here surveys the status of underground comics — or their equivalents — in five European countries, Holland, France, Finland, Sweden, and Great Britain.*

HOLLAND: Holland has a very rich domestic comic scene, especially considering how brief a time it has had its hand in the comics biz. Until the introduction of American comics in the early Fifties, Dutch kids could buy almost nothing but educational-type comic books and picture books with text below the pictures. Although a number of popular European cartoonists were also published in Dutch in the Fifties, it was the American comics, especially the old strips, that really excited interest. Now, two of the largest European importers of American underground comics are in Holland, and some of the best underground comics produced in Europe come from the lowlands.

One distributor got started in the Sixties, when the provos popped out of the Dutch woodwork. The provos were the Dutch hippies. They engaged in many of the same activities as American hippies — smoking marijuana, antagonizing cops, wearing long hair and odd clothes, and putting out their own publications. R. Olaf Stoop, one of the first provos to be arrested for handing out leaflets, started Real Free Press Illustrated in 1968. It was a tabloid-sized newspaper and a proud and active member of the Underground Press Syndicate. There have been six issues so far, each about one-third text and two-thirds comix. At least three quarters of the text in most issues is hand-lettered by Stoop. The work required is staggering, but it does give the paper a unique appearance. The text — part English, part Dutch — is devoted primarily to the underground comics and their creators (Crumb, Shelton, Spain, Ron Cobb, *et al*). Stoop has collected and reprinted many of the serial comix stories published over a period of months in some of the American underground papers. *RFP* also has translated and reprinted four issues of *Witzend*, and imports and distributes many comics, paperbacks and magazines.

Paranoia, Inc., is also a publisher and distributor of comics. Hugo van Baren was an employee of a magazine distributor and traveled around Holland in a van before starting Paranoia, which distributes papers and magazines and imports comics from America. He has clients in Britain, Italy and Germany as well as in The Netherlands. Paranoia has published *Artsy Fartsy Funnies*, a history of underground comics, coauthored by this writer.

The publication of locally produced underground comics began in 1969, when the weekly paper *Hit Week* changed its name to *Aloha* and began publishing cartoons by a Dutchman named Theo van den Boogaard. Soon *Aloha* attracted other cartoonists, and printed strips by Evert Geradts, Marc Smeets and Harry Buckink. Through *Aloha*, these artists met, and when *Aloha's* attempt to produce an underground comic failed in 1970, they pooled their talents and produced their own comic, *Tante Leny Presenteert* (named after Geradts' wife Leny), in January 1971. The first issue sold out immediately, and they continue to produce the comic on a fairly regular schedule. Each contributing artist makes about 20 bucks per issue and there is no profit above that. They choose expensive paper stock and experiment with color, and their print run is only 1,750. Even though of high quality, and produced in such small quantity, *Tante Leny* sells for the equivalent of 50 cents a copy. Since there is no profit expected and the editors handle the printing and distribution, they are able to continue. The magazine is extremely good, one of the best comic magazines produced in Europe. Some of Geradts' work has been published in the United States by Krupp Comic Works. So far, he is the only one of the *Tante Leny* artists to have work published in the States.

Another comic, similar to *TLP* and using some of the same artists, was *Modern Papier*, edited by Jooste Swarte. He halted publication in '73 after ten issues with print runs of around 1,000 each. *Modern Papier* was smaller and cheaper (35 cents) than *Tante Leny*. Its eleventh issue was combined with *Tante Leny Presenteert* No. 13 as a double issue.

There are several active fanzines that report on underground comics as well as publishing articles on old comics. *Stripschrift* is a well-produced magazine that deals mainly with old Dutch comics but also includes sections on new American undergrounds, French and Belgian comics, and other comics-related news. In spring of '71, *Stripschrift* put out a special issue on American undergrounds — a survey of who was drawing the comics, with samples of their work. A few people cancelled their subscriptions, but it was one of the few issues of *Stripschrift* to sell out immediately.

Cisco, another well produced fanzine, is dedicated to the forgotten comics — particularly Dutch and Flemish comics published between 1939 and 1956.

Amsterdam is a very international market and meeting ground. When something new gets in print in Australia, San Francisco, New York, Paris, Germany, Britain or wherever, the Dutch comic fans soon hear of it.

FRANCE: Paris is the center of underground comic activity in France. Despite years of conservative government, no holds are barred in several comic magazines that get public display at newsstands. There are bloody torture scenes, decapitations and enormous sex organs on some comic covers, and despite some official outrage the authorities have been unsuccessful in directly censoring or suppressing them.

In a recent legal battle, a 64-page comic magazine, *Jack l'Eventreur en Vacances (Jack the Ripper on Vacation)*, drawn by Willem, was officially censored by the police. Newsstands and bookstores were not allowed to display the book, either in their windows or inside. All copies had to be kept behind the counter. The book could receive no public notice, either in ads or in reviews, or even to mention that it was banned. Several Paris magazines and tabloids raised enough of a stink about this edict to cause the police to change the ruling.

Willem and several other comic ar-

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tists contribute regularly to three magazines published by Editions du Square — *Charlie Hebdo* (weekly) *Charlie Mensuel* (monthly) and *Harakiri*. The same publisher has brought out about 30 books of cartoons by this group of artists. The format of these books is 64 pages of black-and-white comics with stiff paper covers in color. The American form of comic book — newsprint with slick covers and staples in the binding — is not often used. The French seem to prefer the longer and larger format.

Charlie Hebdo is a tabloid newspaper, usually 16 pages long, printed in one or two colors. It deals mostly in political gossip, current events, and merciless attacks on the government, the military and the church. *Charlie Mensuel* is directed at a larger comic-reading audience and reprints in translation several popular foreign strips, including *Andy Capp*, *Peanuts* and *B.C.*, as well as such vintage comics as Segar's *Thimble Theater*, Busch's *Max and Moritz*, Herriman's *Krazy Kat* and Kurtzman's *Goodman Beaver*. Each issue also contains new material by French, Italian and Dutch artists, in both color and black and white. There are sharp contrasts between some of the strips. Family entertainment like *Peanuts* runs beside strips with explicit nudity and perversions. Each issue is a hundred pages long and chock full of great comics.

Harakiri is without doubt the most offensive and grating of the group. It lives up to its motto, *Bete et Mechant* (stupid and nasty). Reading *Harakiri* makes you want to gag, puke, laugh, rip up pages and read it again and again, if you have the stomach. The magazine is very popular and has been in business for over ten years. A quarter of the magazine is in full color, both photos and drawings. Fumettis or photo-funnies make up much of the material. In one series of such fumettis, helpful hints and advice on love and sex are offered by bald-headed Professor Choron. There are photo *romans* by Gebe. There are many candid photos to which speech balloons have been added. There are grisly photos, such as those of bodies strewn over the landscape after a plane crash in southern France. Much work in design and makeup go into the fumettis and consequently the form has become very popular in France. The magazine carries no ads, except for other magazines and books by the same publisher.

OP HAAR PROEFVAART NOG WEL! MAAR HELAAS WAS DE VREUGDE TE GROOT VOOR DE GENIALE MAAR EXCENTRIEKE SIR FRANCIS. DIEZELFDE AVOND NOG...
EN WIE IS HET LIEFSTE POESJE VAN DE WERELD ?!
NOU ?
EN HOUDT HET POESJE OOK VEEL VAN HET VROUWTJE ??

Evert Geradts, in Tante Leny Presenteert *No. 16.*

Another excellent periodical is *l'Echo des Savanes*, a comic magazine drawn by two men and one woman. *l'Echo* climbed from a first-issue circulation of 10,000 to 100,000 for No. 8. Claire Bretecher is one of the few woman cartoonists in France, and her stories give the women's viewpoint on love and life. She uses very little text and so her meaning is clear in any language. Marcel Gotlib uses much wordplay, often having a dozen speech balloons crammed into one panel. His figures' anatomies are more realistic, although their bodies are stretched in every conceivable fashion for comic effect. The third artist, Mandryka, has a loose cartoon style. His characters are often walking vegatables, animals, sex organs with arms, legs and faces, or stylized stick figures. These three cartoonists have drawn each of the nine issues of *l'Echo des Savanes* together, and they often feature stories about themselves. It was only in the eighth issue that work by other cartoonists was included. There was work by Moebius and Petillon, and even five pages of vampire stories by Harvey Kurtzman.

Numerous tabloids in Paris and other French cities have contained comix. In the student/worker revolt of '68, there was an outburst of creativity in pamphlets, posters and newspapers. Some papers were banned by the government and issued clandestinely, without listing publisher or contributors. Many cartoonists became involved with one newspaper, *l'Enrage*, and its visual power impressed many young artists. It lasted about a dozen issues.

In the fall of '70, the monthly paper *Actuel* published the first Crumb strips in translation in France. They have continued to publish translated comic artwork by several American artists, including Gilbert Shelton and Richard Corben.

Majorie Alessandrini wrote a series of four long articles in '72 on American underground comics for *Rock & Folk*, a slick color magazine on music and superstars. The magazine's publisher, Albin Michel, also publishes books and has begun a series called *The Grafitti Collection*. The first two books appeared in '74, one on R. Crumb, the other on Marcel Gotlib.

Another publisher of underground comics, Psych'Ass Editions, which has already published two books, planned a third book in 1974, *Angoisse (Anguish)*, which was to contain some original S. Clay Wilson material, written in French by Wilson.

Although the French are naturally affected somewhat by American cartoonists' styles and themes, they are primarily engrossed in their own national character and mannerisms. The French follow their own course, at least in comics.

FINLAND: Syndicated newspaper strips and one-page comics in illustrated magazines started appearing in Finland in the 1920s. Most were imports from America and England, but some Finnish artists did strips, too. Finnish artists had plenty of work in all the graphic fields — pulps, comics, postcards, posters and popular magazines.

But the pulps had died out by the Fifties, and popular magazines gradually began using more photographs as illustrations, or buying drawings from big American companies. The market for locally produced comics contracted when two bi-weekly comic books, *Aku Ankka (Donald Duck)* and *Sarjakuvalehti (Comic Book)* appeared in the early Fifties. Both were immediately popular with the kids (previously, Finnish comics had been aimed primarily at an adult audience). *Sarjakuvalehti* was a collection of serialized strips, mostly American, with one page per issue of each strip. *Aku Ankka* printed the Carl Barks stories, plus material from *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*. They were high-quality magazines and very successful. Even today, the weekly *Aku Ankka* sells 200,000 copies in a country of 4.5 million. These two magazines virtually wiped out any local competition, and young artists were left with practically no place to publish their work. In such a small country, most young artists are reluctant to try starting their own publications.

The revival of Finnish comics began in 1968, when Vesa Oittinen published a book of comics titled *Aku Ankka ja Nietzsche (Donald Duck and Nietzsche)*. It was a collection of humor, philosophy and short stories. It sold out, and he published another book of comics, *Erkki Ihmemaasaa (Erkki in Wonderland)*. It was a long story of a young student who falls in love with a rich girl, only to learn of the gulf between their social standings.

In 1969, Timo Aarniala and Heikki Junnila published the book, *Salaisuuden varjo (The Shadow of a Secret)*. This paperback book was a nostalgic mixture of old comics, science fiction and pulps — a tip of the Hatlo hat to a disappearing culture. In 1970 Timo Aarniala drew another book, *Kyynelten tie (The Road of Tears)*.

These books were isolated performances and they received limited distribution, but they caught the attention

Andrevon Pichard, in Charlie Mensuel.

of several other artists. Heikki Kaukoranta was a local comic collector and authority and around him grew a group calling themselves the Comic Society. They published a fanzine and traded information and comics. Pekka Gronow, a member of the Society, was hired by several youth organizations in 1970 to put on a youth arts festival in Turku, Finland. Gronow offered a comics competition and over one hundred entries were received and exhibited at the show. Also shown were some blowups of Crumb and Jay Lynch drawings, bringing the underground comics to public attention. Gronow had learned of *Zap Comics* through a mention in *Rolling Stone*, and started importing underground comics and selling them to friends.

The success of the show caused Williams Publishing, the local Kinney branch, to publish an all-Finnish comic, *Sarjis*, early in 1972. The magazine comes out quarterly and has been moderately successful.

Some of the comic material from the Turku exhibition appeared in 1971 in

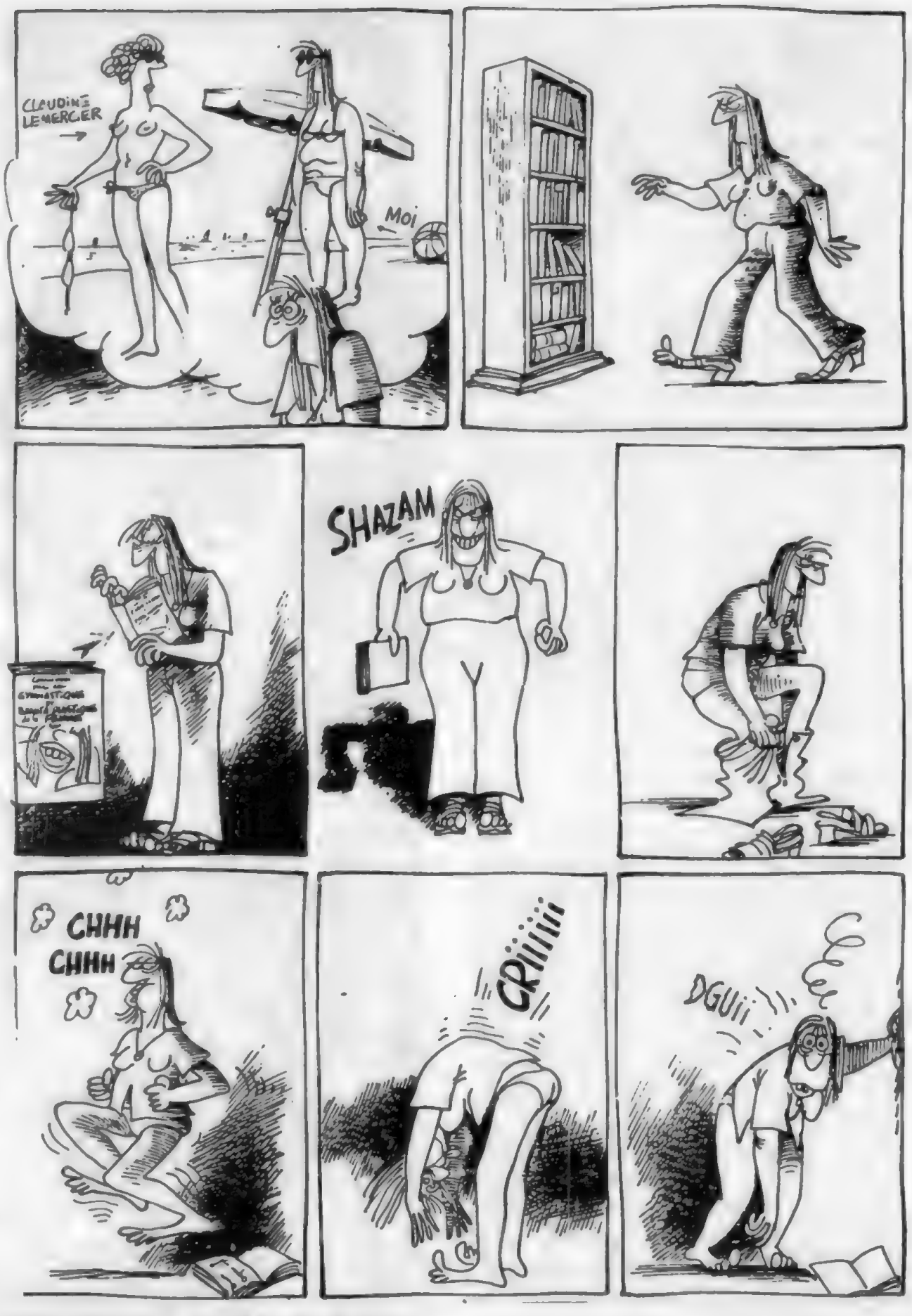
another magazine, *Arpuusi*, put out by a publisher of crossword puzzles. Then in 1973 the same publisher brought out *JYMY*, a quarterly magazine of translated American underground comics, edited by Pekka Gronow. The name *JYMY* is an exclamation like "smash" or "tops," with an old-fashioned flavor. *JYMY* was a popular brand of pipe tobacco in rural Finland in the Fifties. It is also a riff on Finland's biggest redlight street, *HYMY*. The American undergrounds have been well received, especially when translated into Finnish.

There have been some underground papers in Finland but none have lasted long. People with political leanings generally join the Communist and Social Democratic movements, which are very strong and have their own dailies and monthlies. The only underground paper published regularly is *Tahti (Star)* which specializes in the occult. It has occasionally published comics by Kari Sipila, who has also appeared in *JYMY*.

SWEDEN: Sweden's press is also flooded with imported American and British strips, as well as some popular French strips like *Tintin* and *Asterix*. Up until the early Sixties Sweden was very West-oriented, and even now many comics, records, films and TV programs are still imported. Some strips, like *Steve Canyon*, are considered too pro-American and are rejected by Swedish magazines and newspapers. As in Finland, the most pouular comic magazine is *Donald Duck*. A weekly magazine sells 255,000 copies and the monthly sells 120,000. Second most popular is *The Phantom*, which often features locally drawn stories and covers in addition to imports.

DC and Warren comics can be bought in Sweden, but Marvel Comics have never sold well and few are available. Several Swedish comic magazines enjoy steady sales, and feature both domestic strips and translated imports. *91:a*, which is something like *Beetle Bailey* or *Sad Sack*, sells 128,000 copies every fortnight. *Mystiska 2:an* is a very artistic comic about two Swedish boys, one a gypsy, and is drawn by Rolf Gohs, a refugee from the Soviet Union. Gohs also does covers for *Fantomen (The Phantom)*.

Our own Dr. Frederic Wertham had a Swedish counterpart in the witch-hunting Fifties. Nils Bejerot read the good doctor's book, *Seduction of the Innocent*, and published a similar book, using many of the same illustrations. He started an anti-comics crusade and today is still fighting against the seducers of youth. Some consumer coops have started a boycott of horror comics.



Claire Bretecher, in l 'Echo des Savanes.

By contrast, all barriers to pornography have fallen. In the mid-Sixties, many intellectuals, artists and writers started producing pornography in hopes of raising the level of quality and perhaps reforming the field. Instead of reforming anything, these superior works outsold everything else in the porno market and raised the general interest in porn (and made more money for the porno publishers). The government was reluctant to censor the works of well-known artists, and the laws were gradually relaxed, until today, anything goes. Swedish laws now permit all manner of pornographic photographs, so the market for drawn sex is not so good. Photos are cheaper and easier to mass produce.

Although they encounter no legal problems, American underground comics are strongly criticized, especially by politically oriented readers: the comix are too sexy, too positive toward drugs, and have no clear political aims. The

underground comics do have many fans in Sweden, although there has been little attention paid to them by any magazines or newspapers.

The psychedelic dance posters from San Francisco have enjoyed greater popularity than the underground comics. When the posters were at their peak a few years ago, many were imported and sold. The poster is closer to Europe's artistic background than the comic book and was more of a natural to sell.

The comix in counter-culture publications are inspired more by paintings, etching and other traditional art forms than by comics read by the artists as kids. The alternative magazines that feature comix are *Puss* (Kiss) and *Folket i Bild/Kulturfront (People in Pictures/Cultural Front). Folket i Bild/Kulturfront* has a strip called *Bellman*, started by Jan Loof and now drawn by Lars Mossberg. Loof received criticism for drawing bra-less women and making hippies look stupid, so he stopped doing the strip. He now draws a syndicated newspaper strip called *Felix*, an adventure strip with liberal overtones. *Puss* is more into raunch graphics. It often shows famous politicians in sexual situations, and popular comic characters doing likewise, much in the flavor of the eight-pagers of the Thirties. Carl Johan de Geer, of Swedish nobility, started *Puss* with Ulf Rahmberg, Lena Svedberg and Lars Hillersberg. De Geer is a photographer who does fumettis (photo funnies). *Puss*, which is heavily into pictures and drawings to get across its message, has printed strips by Crumb and Wilson.

SUR La Planète GLARFE...
...Dans une Ferme de La Beauce GLUBeuse...
À L'heuRe du MaTuFu
Le MinisTRe des Fiscaillons a de nouveau RéaFFiRmé le caRacTèRe TempoRaiRe des ResTRicTions de GluTamine Qui S'inscRivenT dans le Plan de RèGResseMenT NaTional eT de DéFense du GLINGOT !..
Jules? EncoRe un Peu de MaTuFu?
SeRs m'en donc encoRe une GlobuCHe La maRie ...
2769
GRÔ?
?

Nikita Mandryka, in l'Echo des Savanes.

GREAT BRITAIN: Comic activity in England is picking up after a slow development. Early underground newspapers and comics were dragged through long, costly obscenity trials. The magazine *OZ* was prosecuted in the longest obscenity trial in British history in the summer of 1971, and its three editors were sentenced to two years in prison. They finally won in the Court of Appeals.

Britain's oldest underground newspaper, *I.T.*, began publishing a comic book, *Nasty Tales*, in 1971, with Mick Farren and Edward Baker as editors. Three quarters of their material was pirated American comics. There were eight issues, which helped raise money to keep *I.T.* on its feet, but all profits were lost in the storm brought down by the ripped-off American comics. In January 1973 the editors fought an obscenity prosecution brought against them by the Director of Public Prosecutions; they were charged with a lesser offense than the editors of *OZ*, but it was a heavy rap nonetheless. The jury acquitted them of all charges.

H. Bunch Associates, a spinoff of *OZ*, began publishing comics on a small scale in '72. They published two issues of *Cozmic Comics* in that year. As soon as the *Nasty Tales* trial was over in the spring of '73, publisher Felix Dennis organized, with *I.T.*, a comic book called *The Trial of Nasty Tales*, which was based on the transcript of the trial and drawn by *OZ* artists. Most of the profits went to pay legal fees. It is an interesting account of the trial, much less boring than the actual transcript but very uneven. *The Trial* was a collaboration by many artists, ranging from competent to poor. H. Bunch Associates have to date published 16 comic books, with many more in the works. They export their comix to both Europe and America. British customs laws forbid the importing of American underground comics, but versions printed in Britain have been permitted. H. Bunch has published this year two authorized editions of American comix — *Bijou Funnies* from the Bijou Publishing Empire and *Tales From the Fridge* from Krupp Comic Works, Inc. **END**

The Almost-Anonymous Mr. Stanley

By MAGGIE THOMPSON

It has been almost 30 years since the first *Little Lulu* comic book appeared on America's newsstands. Since then, generations of kids have grown up with Lulu as a friend who showed them that kids can play together as kids — not just as assistants to super-heroes or as pesky prodigies, but as real kids. And a good part of the credit for the introduction goes to John Stanley.

Stanley had been around for some time before Dell Four Color No. 74; his first comic-book work had been done for *Mickey Mouse Magazine* (the predecessor of *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories).* Its developer, Hal Horne, had invited Stanley to work on the new magazine — and they worked on it and eventually left the magazine together. After that, Stanley did various commercial art jobs until he met Oskar Lebeck, who was setting up a comics line for Western Publishing Co., Inc.

When *The Saturday Evening Post* looked for a replacement for Carl Anderson's *Henry* (which was leaving the *Post* for a billet with King Features Syndicate, Inc.), the cartoonist Marge came to the mind of one of the editors. Marjorie Lyman Henderson had been a successful cartoonist for years, and for a while she did some unconnected cartoons to replace *Henry*. Then, in the issue of the *Post* for February 23, 1935, one of the cartoons was captioned "LITTLE LULU" — and a new character was born. Marge drew Lulu for the *Post* through December 30, 1944 — which was the last date that Lulu appeared there. The following year, Lulu popped up in comic-book story form.

John Stanley was given the job of doing the entire first two issues of *Little Lulu* (Nos. 74 and 97), writing and drawing the package for Western. Shortly after the first comic was published, he visited Marge — but basically, he did the book on his own. Marge *did*, however, continue to read the comic book and comment on it — asking for changes when she was unhappy with something (but in post-publication memos).

Others took on part of the Lulu chores as the magazine grew in popularity, and it eventually became a full-fledged title of its own with the issue dated January-February 1948 (No. 1). The mythos became more and more completely developed. (Tubby had been given his first name by Marge — but it was in the comic book that his last name appeared, initially as Trimble and later as Tompkins.) In *Little Lulu* No. 49 there appeared at last a listing of credits: "Little Lulu and associated characters created by Marge with art and story material prepared with the assistance of the following" — and there was a list of

staff writers and illustrators: John Stanley, Gordon Rose, Irving Tripp, and Al Owens.

Stanley continued to do other work, too, for Western and other markets (in *Graphic Story Magazine*, for example, Dan Noonan mentioned his idea submissions to *The New Yorker).* Today, Stanley vows he cannot possibly remember all the work he did in those Golden Days of the Funny Comics. He was a staff man, and he did the work he was handed. Not only did he turn a little girl star of panel cartoons into one who functioned in stories with beginning, middle, end, and point — he also handled straight scripting and much other work. He says he doesn't remember details of those days — and he himself, couldn't confirm or deny many specific questions of authorship from that era.

Stanley described his work on *Little Lulu* this way:

"For the 13 or 14 years I did them, *all* the stories, gags, etc., good and bad, were written entirely by me. The stories were done in storyboard form . . . and sent to the Poughkeepsie plant to be copied on large sheets of bristol board, inked and lettered . . .

"*All* the front covers were drawn and finished by me.

"After I quit doing Lulu I imagine the job of writing it was given to the staff artists because of their familiarity with my style. But some time later the magazine must have gone into a decline, because they began reprinting my old stories 'by popular demand.' "

Today, Stanley lives in a small town about halfway between Poughkeepsie and New York City and works for some sort of silk-screening company. He's not interested in returning to comic-book work at all, though (like almost all of us) he has his more and less ambitious days. At one recent point, he told Denis Kitchen that he might try some work for one of the underground comics — but by the time I spoke with him, the interest had passed. I mentioned with some enthusiasm the high prices now paid for Carl Barks' work — and he seemed surprised and happy for Barks but flatly rejected the idea of his trying anything similar.

Part of his decision to do no more comics work may come from lack of residuals from reprinted work (his wife mentioned that he receives nothing when stories are printed again by Western). Part may come from his currently expressed opinion that he doesn't think much of a lot of the work he did.

He has done literally countless jobs and he claims almost proudly that no one could point them all out. Few carry his signature, though he was credited with the cover of *Little Lulu* No. 49 and he did get to sign Dell's *Melvin Monster.* (There are clues to much of his unsigned work: the character screaming "YOW!" in fury or fright, frequent use of overweight characters, assorted sound effects peculiar to his work, the slapstick situation of disasters in the wake of an unnoticing causative figure, etc.) Even the keen-eyed would probably miss his "straight" work, which includes a "nurse" comic *(Linda Lark)* that bears little resemblance to his wild *Nellie the Nurse.*

Those of us who collect his work have to be pretty good detectives — and even then, we'll have to work without his help. He says that one reason he doesn't answer his mail is that so many letters ask questions like, "What stories did you script in *Little Lulu* No. 75?" — and he has neither the comics, the data, nor the interest to answer. **END**

Maggie Thompson is a widely published fan writer and co-editor (with her husband Don) of Comic Art.

From Dnevnik (Diary), the winner of the top prize at the Zagreb animation festival.

Zagreb Notes

By GRAHAM WEBB

Zagreb, Yugoslavia, apart from being one of the least accessible cities in the universe, can lay claim to having one of the most discussed animation studios in the world. Appropriately, then, it is the site of a biennial World Animated Film Festival, the second of which was held on June 10-15 of last year.

★★★

Stepping lightly over the drunken animators festooning the streets, we wended our way to the brand new Festival Hall, where the animated entries, submitted from no less than 27 countries, were to be shown.

In addition to the 450-odd cartoons in and out of competition, there were retrospective showings of the work of Walt Disney, Bob Godfrey (of Great Britain), Fedor Hitruk (of Russia), John Hubley, and Bretislav Pojar (of Czechosolvakia).

For those who wanted to *hear* the pictures that were shown it was another matter, as the Festival Hall is really an opera hall and not acoustically perfect for films.

★★★

I must say that I find it annoying when a stretch of particularly boring films is being shown and rowdies commence to jeer, whistle, clap slowly and make a general nuisance of themselves, because (A) it must be embarrassing for the director if he has to stand up and take a bow after the showing, and (B) it keeps the rest of us awake.

★★★

British newspaper cartoonist Gerald Scarfe entered his first attempt at film making and got an award. His entry, *Long Drawn-Out Trip*, was made on an interesting and complicated device, the Jean Dejoux Animographe. Not wishing to go into the process because I don't fully understand it myself, I can say that the overall effect is exceptionally crisp and neat. *Long Drawn-Out Trip* is based on sketches Scarfe made while in the United States, and is full of topical jokes that will no doubt date very quickly.

★★★

Strangely, *The Crunch Bird* was entered in competition, and now I can reveal all. Ted Petok is a hell of a nice guy, but the film itself leaves something to be desired. Since it lasts only about two minutes and is based on a rather old joke, it's a wonder that it won the Academy Award three years ago.

The story line is that a woman who is always spending her husband's earnings on frivolous things decides to buy him a present. She goes to a pet shop, where she takes to the Crunch Bird of the title. "That bird is very dangerous!" warns the shop owner. "Crunch Bird," he cries, "... the chair." The bird immediately devours the chair. Nevertheless, the woman buys the bird and brings it home to her husband. When hubby returns home and spies the bird, he thinks it's more frivolous spending. "What the hell is it, anyway?" he demands. "It's a Crunch Bird," comes the reply. (Now here comes the punch line. Are you ready?) In a fit of rage the husband shouts: "Crunch Bird? My ass!" The bird zeroes in and we fade out to chewing noises.

Well, there it is. The 1971 Oscar winner. But *how* and *why* did it get into the 1974 Zagreb Festival as a competitor?

★★★

Dnevnik (Diary), which topped the list of winners, was made by Yugoslavian Nedeljko Dragic, who also made the animated introduction that we had to suffer through at the start of each program.

Personally, I can't see how *Dnevnik* won, as there were much better films shown. Dragic is heavily influenced by such artists as Steinberg, Ralph Steadman, Disney, and Leo Baxendale, and many others.

Who, you might ask, is Leo Baxendale?

Well, in the Sixties he dominated the British weekly comics, drawing at least six or seven pages a week. Baxendale is a legend of sorts in England, although he's not all that well known anywhere else.

My personal favorite was *Animation Pie*, by Robert Bloomberg, who went about filming children as they made their own animated films. **END**

Graham Webb, a British animation buff, is, with Hames Ware, one of the great authorities on the voices of cartoon characters.

Funny Books . . .

By MIKE BARRIER

It has been almost a decade since Jules Feiffer's *The Great Comic Book Heroes* was published. Since then, there have been quite a few more books about comic books, propelled at first by the publicity given to comic collecting and then by "nostalgia" in general. There had been books about the comics before the Feiffer book, of course, but they were mostly about comic strips, and didn't pay much attention to comic books. Comic books were left to authors like Frederic Wertham, who wrote about them only to condemn them. Only a few tiny, obscure books — written by people in the business — treated comic books sympathetically. The Feiffer book — with its hard covers, color reprints and general high gloss — was on a different level, and cleared the way for its successors. With the tenth anniversary of *The Great Comic Book Heroes* at hand, it seems appropriate to consider what Feiffer wrought.

The Feiffer book was shallow — deliberately so — and the same can be said of most of the other books about the comics that have been published in the last ten years. It's only now that we're starting to see the results of some true research into the field. The second volume of **Who's Who in American Comic Books**, covering letters G-M, was published this fall (large paperbound, 164 pages; available from Jerry G. Bails, 487 Lakewood, Detroit, Michigan 48215; no price given, so you'll have to inquire about that, or buy it from a dealer), and, like the first volume (published in 1973), it has the incalculable virtue of comprehensiveness. Jerry Bails and Hames Ware, the co-editors of the *Who's Who*, have sought to list literally everyone who has worked on American comic books from 1929 to the present day, and, on the evidence of the first two volumes, they are coming remarkably close to succeeding. It's easy to think of a hundred ways in which the *Who's Who* could be improved (making the biographical entries more readable, for example) but this is a case in which the mere existence of a book is far more important than its flaws. The book contains some errors that could have been avoided, such as misspelled names (John Gentilella comes out "Gentilla," and Paul Murry is "Murray"), and many entries are woefully incomplete; but to a large extent, its shortcomings can be blamed on a lack of cooperation from the very people who are being honored in the book (for example, neither Murry nor Gentilella, both of whom were still active the last time I looked, bothered to fill out one of the biographical forms that Bails and Ware have distributed in enormous numbers).

Perhaps the cartoonists who ignored the *Who's Who* share the contempt for their work so obviously felt by many of the editors and publishers for whom they worked. Contempt for the artist is endemic in the popular arts, where it is usually equated with an objective, businesslike attitude. Perhaps it's really not so surprising that a lot of cartoonists regard their work — and so, by implication, themselves — with undisguised disdain. Contempt is infectious, and it's a wonder that more of the comics' artists and writers didn't fall victim to it.

The Bails-Ware volumes are privately published, and it's difficult to think of a commercial publisher that would take on such a project. Most book publishers — like most comics publishers — seem to regard the popular arts as merely something to be exploited as cheaply and quickly as possible; and most reviewers seem blind to the shoddy hoax to which readers of such books are subjected. Sometimes it seems that the worse a book on the popular arts is, the more it is praised; thus a real horror like Russel Nye's *The Unembarrassed Muse* is praised effusively by people who should know better, and *The New York Times* says of Les Daniels' **Comix: A History of Comic Books in America** (198 pages; published at $7.95 by Outerbridge & Dienstfrey in 1971, but now available in a cheaper hardcover reprint) that it is not only "highly entertaining" but "scholarly." As Jerry Bails pointed out to me when Comix first appeared, its "scholarship" is all in its prose style, which is simply a variant on the social-sciences prose style that has been the bane of our universities for several decades at least. The whole point of this thick, labored style is to suggest scientific certainty where none exists. Because the academic style is so widespread, it's harder than ever before to find even an English professor — or an English major — who can write a good, clear sentence. Daniels, who majored in English at Brown University, is not a member of this dwindling minority.

The popular arts are especially vulnerable to attack by those who write in academic prose, because so little real research has been done on them; true scholarship in the popular arts is practically nonexistent, and criticism of them is still in its infancy. A Russel Nye or a Richard Schickel can thus become an "authority" on the basis of one bad book.

Hames Ware provided me with some insights into the "scholarship" behind the Daniels book several years ago: "The reason the book is disappointing is that it, like its predecessors, fails to go to the people who made the very history it purportedly gives. Instead, it second-hands, second-guesses, what easily could have been verified and documented for them by the very people involved (most of whom are hardly doddering on senility. The fact is, 95 per cent of the giants of the American comic book are hale and hearty and, I might add, very vocal — about the field, their co-workers and their own careers)."

In fact, *Comix* is not really a history, but a collection of essays. In some of them — such as his analysis of the super-hero comics — Daniels tries to conceal his lack of interest in the subject by grinding it through the academic prose style. As usual in such cases, his analyses obscure rather than illuminate.

By contrast, in those few chapters in which Daniels *is* enthusiastic about something, and lets it show, the result is over-excited fanzine prose. His enthusiasm isn't any more illuminating than his boredom. For example, he describes Harvey Kurtzman's EC comic books as "imaginative." But in fact, Kurtzman's strength lies not in his imagination, but in his literalism. The basic premise of the Kurtzman books is hostility to the sort of "imagination" displayed in the super-hero comics. Good parodists — and Kurtzman is a great one — almost of necessity lack imagination; this limitation permits them to see the ab-

surdity of conventions and rituals that are taken for granted by most people. Kurtzman's literal-mindedness led to great comic nihilism in *Mad*; it led to a deadly earnest insistence on authenticity in his war comics, which are just the other side of the same coin. To describe Kurtzman as "imaginative" is not simply vague, but wrong. Daniels occasionally rises above this low level, but not very often.

Back in 1971, when *Comix* first appeared, I asked Jerry DeFuccio of *Mad* (another dedicated comics researcher, whose work has turned up under other writers' names in a number of books), what he thought about the book, and he said in part, ". . . I am prejudiced about dedicated researchers. I speak to Jim Steranko almost every week, and this man is truly amazing and thorough. I touted him on a comic-book collection (vintage) in Union city, New Jersey, and he was there last week, in a jammed-to-the rafters dusty bookshop, where he had to balance himself on one foot for five hours, while he recorded issues, and he's somewhere in the States, every week, digging, digging, digging."

The first two volumes in **The Steranko History of Comics** (Volume 1, published in 1970, contains 84 pages and costs $4.00 plus 35 cents postage; Volume 2, published in 1972, contains 128 pages and costs $6.00 plus 50 cents postage; both books — outsized paperbacks — are available from Supergraphics, Box 445, Wyomissing, Pa. 19610) do indeed show a lot of dedicated effort. It's doubtful that anyone else will ever go to such trouble to write the history of comic books, or that anyone besides Steranko — himself a comics artist — will ever have such ready access to artists and writers and editors. It's a great pity, then, that Steranko's books are masterpieces of bad scholarship.

Steranko seems to have gone out of his way to encourage us not to believe what he says. There are no notes, no indexes, and generally no evidence of how Steranko tested and weighed what he put into print. Chapters disintegrate into maddening biographies of mediocre artists; the narrative is confusing and hard to keep straight (especially without an index for cross-checking), and only the covers of comic books are reproduced, so that it's difficult for us to match our own judgment of a particular artist's work against Steranko's.

Here we come to the crux of the matter: Steranko's own taste in comics. In his opening chapter, Steranko writes as if the super-hero comic book were the culmination of thousands of centuries of human development and as if the comic strip were merely the prelude to the glorious dawn of *Action Comics* No. 1. Now, in itself, there's nothing wrong with an enthusiasm for the old super-heroes; but when it dominates a writer's work as much as it dominates Steranko's, then it makes him unreliable. He isn't far enough removed from the subject to permit us to trust his accuracy.

One reason the old super-hero comics appealed so much to people like Steranko was their very lack of respectability; for Steranko to give his books an air of scholarship — and so of respectability — would in a sense be a betrayal of the comic bocks and what they meant. But he has gone too far, to the point that his lumpy bundles of "facts" aren't usable even as raw material by other, better writers. Steranko has poisoned his own well.

What most undermine Steranko's credibility are the sharp contrasts in what "Steranko" says at certain points in the book. Here, for example, is what "Steranko" says in his chapter about Captain America:

> "Those that were critical of his two-dimensional character failed to grasp the true implication of his being. Steve Rogers (Captain America's secret identity) never existed, except perhaps as an abstract device for the convenience of storytelling. Captain America was not an embodiment of human characteristics but a pure idea. He was not a man but all men; not a being but a cumulative god that symbolized the inner reality of man. He was the American truth."

Compare that with what "Steranko" says about Blackhawk:

> "Whether he knew it or not, Blackhawk had become the personification of all he hated. In costume and concept he summed up the fascist point of view. In the comic world he remains the ultimate right-winger, the pro-militant avenger taking the law into his own hands, complete with an army of enforcers."

It's difficult for me to believe that the same man wrote both those paragraphs. Almost none of the writing in the books is any good — most of it is fulsome praise for junk — but it's not bad in any consistent way.

Steranko's books point up a basic problem: Anyone who writes about the comics should have an absorbing interest in them; otherwise, we get deadly academic stuff, like most of Daniels' book. But if the writer is *entranced* by the comics, as Steranko obviously is, then he may be incapable of writing about them perceptively. When it comes to books about comic books, we may have to choose between pedants and fans — and for me, that's no choice at all. We have had a few good short pieces about comics, like some of those in Lupoff and Thompson's *All in Color for a Dime*, and presumably there will be more, but any good comprehensive history of comic books seems beyond our reach.

Comics: Anatomy of a Mass Medium by Reinhold Reitberger and Wolfgang Fuchs (Little, Brown, 1972; 264 pages; $6.95 paper, $12.50 hardcover) falls even shorter of the mark than Steranko's books. This is a German book about American comic books (for the most part); the text has been translated into mediocre English, but many of the original illustrations — in which American comics characters speak in German dialogue balloons — have been left intact, producing an odd effect. Reading the book is, in fact, like looking at American comics through the wrong end of a telescope. The first page gives the book away; speaking of what they say is an unabated public enthusiasm for comics, the authors compare the one million readers who responded to Al Capp's "Lena the Hyena" contest with the fewer than 50,000 readers who responded to a contest promoted in a contemporary comic strip. The latter competition proved, they said, "that today comic strips are still followed with the same enthusiasm as ever." Their own figures prove them wrong. The rest of the book — or as much of it as I could bring myself to read — is similarly dull-witted.

Little, Brown responded to the increased interest in comics by importing a bad German book; Tony DeLuna, who was art director for Parents' Magazine Press until 1973, responded to it by reissuing a good old book. His first book, published in 1971, is Martin Sheridan's **Comics and Their Creators** (paperbound; 304 pages; $4.00 from Luna Press, Inc., Box 1049, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11202). The Sheridan book is a collection of about a hundred brief biographies of the comic-strip artists of thirty years ago. Its value is not as a critical history, but rather as a record of the comic strip at a time when it had not yet lost its hold on the public imagination.

The best reprints, of course, are those of comics themselves, and there have been a lot of them in the last ten

years. Many of the reprint volumes can be written off as readily as the Reitberger-Fuchs book. The reprints of old Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman stories fall in this category, as do a number of the books reprinting old comic strips. The Nostalgia Press strip reprints, on the other hand, are generally attractive and worth the price (the Popeye book, with an introduction by Bill Blackbeard, is especially good).

The most significant comic-book reprints have been issued as if they were underground comic books, with correspondingly high (for comic books) price tags. So far, about ten of the old EC comic books have been reprinted in this fashion, as have two issues of a *Spirit* comic book (by Krupp Comic Works). **The Spirit** has since become a handsome, bi-monthly magazine (published by Warren), made up mostly of reprints. This new magazine is the culmination of the Spirit's slow return to glory, first in the Feiffer book, then in a New York newspaper and two Harvey comic books in 1966, reprints of the earliest Spirit Sunday comic sections in 1972, and the two underground comics in 1973. Along the way, Eisner has turned out some new work, the most important of which is probably a tabloid-sized, five-page comic in full color (available for $3.40 from Tabloid Press, P.O. Box 1064, Oakville, Ontario, Canada). Eisner's new work is virtually indistinguishable from his old, except for its often raunchier subject matter and, perhaps, a slight softening around the edges of his style.

I remember how fascinated I was by that style when I read the two issues of Harvey reprints in 1966. That was my first real exposure to Eisner's work, and I was hypnotized. Eisner was far more daring and innovative than almost any other comics artist I could think of, in his odd angles, his semi-cartoon style, his wry comedy, and, especially, his timing. Eisner didn't imitate movie timing, as Bernard Krigstein did in "Master Race" (*Impact* No. 1) by trying to make each panel almost the equivalent of a frame of film. Instead, Eisner recognized that comic-book panels can represent varying amounts of time — a single panel can contain only an instant of time, or it can contain several minutes, or even more. In Eisner's panels, time is compressed and expanded with great daring; his strips are full of sudden surprises and unexpected calms. They have a rhythm quite unlike that of any other cartoonist's work. It's all very exciting — when it works.

Too often, it doesn't. When Eisner is at his best, he carries us not just through but above his stories; style and substance are not only inseparable, they are identical. But when his devices misfire — when panels are poorly composed, when the story's rhythm is jerky and uneven, when he tries to cram too much into his standard seven pages — then we have to look under and around his techniques to find the story he's telling. That, alas, is an unrewarding exercise. The plots and characterization in most of Eisner's stories are mundane comic-book stuff at best, and sometimes lapse into the foolish or the banal — and never more so than when Eisner is grasping at profundity. Among his hundreds of stories, there have probably been more misses than hits. But the misses are merely annoying; the hits are great fun, and I would much rather read the Warren *Spirit* than any other comics magazine on the newsstands today.

That would be a more ringing endorsement if *The Spirit* had any competition; but it doesn't. I was mildly shocked recently when I realized that I simply don't buy any current comic books any more. I buy *The Spirit*, the Disney comics with Barks reprints (for the sake of the Barks bibliography), and a handful of other reprint titles. But that's really about all. In the middle Sixties, I read and enjoyed many of the Marvel titles; they were formula stuff, but the formulas were new and the people working with them seemed to be having a good time. A little later, a few DC titles, like the early Kirby titles and *Swamp Thing*, were fun to read. I never felt that the time I spent reading such comic books was wasted. But now, the thought of spending ten or 15 minutes with the junk on today's newsstand is intolerable. I suppose the watershed year for me was 1971; that was when my limited interest in current comics began to ebb rapidly. It was then that it became clear that the traditional comic book is hopelessly hamstrung by the low levels of everyone's aspirations for it. The comic-book publishers have won the ultimate victory; they have kept the comics, and their artists and writers, pressed so deep in the mud that a comic book espousing a juvenile morality can be regarded as a breakthrough.

That comic book was, of course, *Green Lantern*, which was, for the last two years (1970-1972) of its life, determinedly "relevant" (a word that now seems as dated as the comic book itself). For about a dozen issues, in stories muddily written by Denny O'Neil and hysterically illustrated by Neal Adams, Green Lantern and his companion Green Arrow roamed the United States, engaging in adventures that suggested parallels to real-life events like the Manson murders. During its brief life, the "new" *Green Lantern* received almost unprecedented attention for a comic book; it was written about in major magazines , and some of its stories were collected in two paperback books (**Green Lantern and Green Arrow** No. 1 and No. 2, Paperback Library, 1972; pages unnumbered; 75 cents each).

The most celebrated of all the *Green Lantern* stories was a two-part story in issues 85 and 86, in which Green Arrow's ward, Speedy, became briefly addicted to drugs — a development for which Green Arrow was blamed, by Speedy and, implicitly, by O'Neil. The story was offered as an attack on the drug problem, but in fact, it was nothing of the kind. It was instead an expression of adolescent self-pity.

O'Neil presented the dangers of heroin in terms of its physical effects — painful withdrawal, sudden death, a ragged, unhappy existence. He offered justifications for heroin use in psychological and social terms — addiction was presented as an understandable, defensible response to the adult world and what it does to the young. Yet, the grim truth is that if heroin were legal and pure heroin were readily available at low prices, most of the debilitating effects now associated with heroin use would disappear. The use of the pure drug is simply not that destructive, in its physical effects; it is dirty needles, and glassine bags filled with varying mixtures of heroin and quinine, coffee and other adulterants that cause most of the disease and death. Even with heroin illegal and adulterated, a study of addicts in Washington, D.C., a couple of years ago found most of them to be remarkably healthy.

The real dangers of heroin addiction lie not in its physical effects, but in its psychological effects. The O'Neil script did not deal with the psychological hazards of heroin use at all, but instead endorsed the adolescent emotions that can make heroin use attractive. As O'Neil presented it, addiction is almost heroic, because it is a gesture of contempt for the despised adult world.

Perhaps even O'Neil's script might have worked if it had been in the hands of an artist like Eisner, whose work contains an element of caricature. But Adams draws in a doggedly "realistic" style, and worse, he is a melodramatic artist, whose characters seem always to

be on the verge of nervous breakdowns. The result is a harsh, overbearing story, oblivious to its own moral confusion.

And yet this is — to judge from the praise of comics fans, and the self-congratulatory comments by the artist and writer — about the best that we can expect from the traditional comic book. Alas, I suspect they're right, although not for the reasons they think. The key is not in the quality of the work, but in the nature of its audience.

The best work in comic books has always taken place in the wings, away from those comics in which children's interest was most *intense*, and so most limiting. As much as I loved Carl Barks' stories, I don't think I ever felt about them the way other kids felt about the super-hero stories. The super-hero stories indulged children's fantasies completely, offering wish-fulfillment at its baldest and crudest. The EC horror comics were superficially very different, but they served much the same function. In the realism of their drawing, and the gruesomeness of their subject matter, they were in effect a repudiation of the old super-hero fantasies. Adolescents — who were trying to put distance between themselves and their own childhoods, including those super-hero fantasies — could thus find the EC comics very much to their taste. Their "realism" and toughness were really just a fantasy of another kind, one catering to teenagers rather than younger kids. The current Warren horror comics probably appeal to the same sort of audience, and *Green Lantern* was aimed in that direction, too, but the mixture of childhood fantasies (in the person of the two super-heroes) and adolescent "realism" was evidently too much for many readers to swallow.

There doesn't seem to be room in traditional comic books any more for artists like Barks, whose work was appreciated but not suffocated by the children who read it. Now, the highest standards in the comic-book business seem to be those set by 14-year-old Marvel collectors. Comics fans, by encouraging the production of comics aimed at teenagers, instead of at younger children, may have ruined the chances of any more good work coming out of the big comics houses. As *Green Lantern* shows, adolescents' fantasies are even more confining than children's fantasies.

The most nearly "adult" comics being published now are underground comics (even though a lot of those are just as mired in adolescent emotions as the "straight" comics). The underground comics received their first book-length treatment this year, in Mark Estren's **A History of Underground Comics** (Straight Arrow; 288 pages; large paperbound; $9.95). The title is misleading; Estren doesn't consider the book a history, but the publishers wanted to call it that, and so they compromised by calling it "a" history rather than "the" history. This is typical of the book's own history, which has been long and harrowing. It originated as a graduate-school thesis, and then bounced from publisher to publisher for a few years, before Straight Arrow (Rolling Stone's book branch) finally brought it out. As a result of all this coming and going, the book has a patchwork character, with some material obviously added to bring the book more nearly up to date.

The book's more serious flaw can be traced to its academic origins. Estren is simply too cautious; he leans too heavily on other authors (including me). When Estren does speak out clearly, he is sometimes good (as in his discussion of sex in the underground comics), and sometimes bad (when he talks about the underground cartoonists' social and political attitudes), but it is always a relief to hear his own voice. The book's truly "historical" aspects are of mixed quality. Estren reveals a lot of interesting facts about the birth of underground comics, and his quotations from the cartoonists on their work are frequently revealing; but much of what he says about the underground comics' predecessors has that obligatory, ho-hum quality that is so familiar from other books about the comics (remember all those chapters about the Bayeux tapestry and the cave paintings?), and it contains a number of inaccuracies (such as identifying Barks as the creator of Donald Duck).

The best feature of Estren's *History* is its illustrations, which have been brilliantly chosen and beautifully reproduced. As Estren remarks, "because the underground cartoonists have unique styles . . . the sense of their work can be put across by individual panels" — a point he demonstrates repeatedly through his choice of panels. In the few hundred panels that illustrate the book, you can find more diversity than in a huge pile of "straight" comics.

Probably because the book was so long in the womb, Estren slights a number of artists who deserve more attention (Richard Corben, for example). One of these artists is Bil[1] Bergeron, whose work has never, as far as I know, appeared in an underground comic book, although at least one of his strips has been published in at least one underground paper. Otherwise, his work has been published only in such odd places as *Creem* magazine, *Chicago Review* and *North American Review*.

Despite his tenuous connections with underground publications, Bergeron is very much an underground cartoonist in spirit — that is, in his disregard for the conventions and taboos that have strangled traditional comic books and strips. But in one important respect, he is very different from other underground cartoonists. He is a poet, one of the few ever to appear in comics, and perhaps the only one to be published since George Herriman's death. When I say that he is a poet, I mean that he has a feeling for ambiguity and for emotional shadings that is lacking in most other cartoonists. He has used animal characters in many of his strips, but instead of bringing his stories down to earth, these animals merely make them more mysterious; their talk, and their lives, are achingly real, but their appearance — which may be almost realistic in one story, crudely cartoony in another — separates them from us. Bergeron's panels are sometimes dense and difficult to penetrate, but the effect, when the penetration has been made, is totally different from what happens when we puzzle through a bad Eisner story. There is no feeling that we have seen through a trick, but only that we have come closer to the heart of a deep secret. Bergeron has a keen ear; he has captured the voices of Catholic teenagers, growing up in northern Illinois in the Fifties. I remember how hard and alien such voices sounded to me when I started to college in Chicago in 1958, and Bergeron has reproduced them perfectly.

Bergeron was born in 1938, and grew up in Illinois. The brief biography on the back of his book, **Prairie State Blues**, published in 1973 (pages unnumbered; paperbound; $2.95 from Chicago Review Press, 721 E. Walton Place, Chicago, Illinois 60611), says little more than that, except that he worked as a railroad fireman for five years. He has lived in California for more than ten years. The 16 stories collected in *Prairie State Blues* are almost all dated from 1970 to 1972; a few are earlier. I know of another five stories from that period that were not included in the book; only a little new Bergeron work has been published since the book appeared.

Prairie State Blues is one of the most important comics publications since the

first issue of *Zap Comics*. Bergeron is — with Crumb, Shelton, Corben and a few others — one of the half dozen or so active cartoonists whom I most admire. I can't recommend his book too highly.

. . . Mislabeled Books . . .

THE EARLY COMIC STRIP: Narrative Strips and Picture Stories in the European Broadsheet from c. 1450 to 1825, by David Kunzle. University of California Press, 471 pages; bibliography and index, numerous illustrations in text, one color plate; $35.00

By BILL BLACKBEARD

Given: a reviewer's problem. *Given:* a make-believe example. Let us suppose that Samuel Eliot Morison had just written his fine and current *European Discovery of America: The Southern Voyages 1492-1616* (with no preceding volume) and was almost totally unknown to both general and academic readers. Now let us further suppose that such a new work on sea-faring explorers, however good, would not excite much academic or popular attention for Mr. Morison, but that any text of imposing bulk on the (let us imagine) little-studied or understood subject of pirates would indeed do so. Let us then pretend that Mr. Morison, sent mad, professed to believe that the roots of piracy were plainly imbedded in the character and activities of all explorers, and so linked his book not only titularly to this status-elevating subject by calling it *The Earliest Pirates in the New World: 1492-1616*, but proceeded to refer throughout his text to such figures as Drake, Magellan, Columbus, *et al*, as if they were buccaneers and pirates.

How on earth should a reviewer, faced with the usual space limitations and reasonably converse with the actual nature of pirates, discuss so preposterously wrong-headed but fundamentally well-researched and informative a book, its basic premise aside? Should he dwell on its merits as a work on New World explorers, cavilling only in passing with the piracy assumption, so that the author's valid work was fairly assessed; or should he refute the writer's deluded premise in full for the readers and academics inexpert enough to be persuaded by it, but perhaps slight the book's real worth by insufficient attention? For better or worse, this reviewer feels that the latter course is best — the correcting of basic error is certainly a reviewer's first duty to a book's potential readers — and I have accordingly chosen it in discussing David Kunzle's similarly wrongheaded and mistitled book, *The Early Comic Strip*.

Mr. Kunzle, Assistant Professor of Art at the University of California at Santa Barbara, has written a sizable, exhaustive, and generally commendable study of a worthwhile subject which should properly and simply be titled *The European Anecdotal Broadsheet: 1450-1825*. Unfortunately for propriety, Mr. Kunzle's actual title reflects his King Charles' Head obsession with a wholly unrelated topic: the comic strip narrative form, the first definitive example of which appeared in 1896*. He believes that the early popular prints and posters in sequential panels which comprise his subject matter were not just splendidly themselves, not just rudimentary precursors of an aspect of comic strips (as they were), but are indeed full-fledged comic strips in themselves, gone unrecognized until now.

The European broadsheet of multi-panel layout which is Mr. Kunzle's concern was, put simply, a printed flat sheet or foldover of two or more humorous or serious drawings in color or black and white with explanatory or exhortatory captions of varying lengths in print or script, hawked or posted in the streets and shops across Europe from shortly after the invention of the printing press until well into the 19th Century. (Mr. Kunzle does not touch even referentially on the similar Japanese prints of the Edo period, which he must feel were comic strips also.) The vast majority of these broadsheets were inspired by current political, military, or fashionable social events and personalities, or were forthright comments on alleged social evils. The art and text in a given broadsheet might be by a single artist, or by an artist and writer team. Such masters of graphic satire as Hogarth, Gillray, Daumier, and others were involved, together with legions of hacks. Much of the art is far from humorous in concept, and often consists of attempts at full realism in prevailing period styles, thus approximating a journalistic effect. Only a very small part of this immense body of publication was concerned with what might be considered purely entertaining fictional narrative, let alone the development of plot or character in pictorial story form.

Thus, stylistically and thematically, the relationship of the broadsheet to the comic strip is distant and tenuous at best, although Mr. Kunzle has apparently attempted to create an illusion of visual similarity throughout his book by sharply reducing his illustrative cuts of original broadsheets from viewable size to such dark, mean, and minascule vignettes that many of his pages, seen casually in a hurried flipthrough of the book, do resemble photographs of the crammed comic-book pages of the 1930s and 1940s. (Mr. Kunzle apologizes for this by explaining his focus on multi-panel broadsheets and his desire to include "all" such broadsheets which qualify as "picture-stories" within the limited confines of his volume: he seems unconcerned with the inability of his readers to make much of the bulk of the panels reproduced without the aid of a magnifying glass, although he does murmur a demurrer or two about "quality of reproduction" and "photographs never seeming large enough." It nowhere seems to occur to him that the majority of his material is graphic rubbish, better described than reprinted in all its ugliness, and that he might more wisely have concentrated on reproducing panels from his artistically worthwhile broadsides at his full (13 1/2" x 10 1/2") page size, with just a few specimens of the complete broadside in miniature reproduction.)

To support his view that these popularly printed panel narratives qualify as comic strips, Mr. Kunzle has formulated a set of four "conditions" which a definition of the comic strip must meet (although he avoids a formal

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Bill Blackbeard is the founder of the San Francisco Academy of Comic Art. His book on the art of the comic strip will be published by Oxford University Press.

*A sequence of *The Yellow Kid* with panels and balloons in Hearst's Sunday *American Humorist* for October 18, 1896.

definition of his own). "1)" calls for "a sequence of separate images" amounting to at least two and preferably four panels per instance or episode. (That this would rule out as a comic strip episode any daily sequence of, say, *Terry and the Pirates* of only one panel — there were several — or the full runs of such basic and famed strips as the panel-per-day *Toonerville Folks* or *Our Boarding House* does not seem to occur to Mr. Kunzle.) "2)" avers that "there must be a preponderance of images over text." (Here Mr. Kunzle discards such strips as *The Gumps* and *The Nebbs* of the 1920s, in which text often outbalanced pictorial matter, to the great narrative enhancement of the strips at those points.) "3)" states that the medium which carries the strip must be a "mass" medium. (Thus an unpublished strip whose only "medium" is the pasteboard on which is has been drawn is not, per Mr. Kunzle, a strip at all; nor, possibly, would be strips printed only in journals of small circulation, etc.) "4)" propounds that strips "must tell a story which is both moral and topical." (Since this last stricture of Mr. Kunzle's excludes the bulk of *Krazy Kat*, generally considered the greatest comic strip ever drawn, further comment is unnecessary.) At a later point, Mr. Kunzle even tries to denigrate the importance of dialogue balloons in the strip narrative form: a position so preposterous that even he does not embarrass himself by dwelling extensively on it.

Clearly, Mr. Kunzle is more concerned with promoting a definitive concept of comic strips which would admit the broadsheets of his interest to qualification (as it would, willy-nilly, thousands of pages in European and American cartoon gag magazines of the 1800s forward) than he is in defining what is genuinely unique in the comic strip. (Correctly, Mr. Kunzle does state that the comic strip is essentially a narrative art rather than a pictorial one, but unfortunately for this morsel of accuracy he does not seem to understand the difference between a narrative, or narration (*Webster's Collegiate*, 1936: "... designed to represent a connected succession of happenings, esp. such ... involving plot, setting, and characterization") and an anecdote (*op cit*: "... a separable incident or event of curious interest ..."). His broadsheet picture sequences are obviously more anecdote than narrative in extent, while plot and characterization as commonly understood are almost wholly absent from them.)

To set the matter straight, the popularly published pictorial story matter Mr. Kunzle discusses has only its popular method of distribution and its left-to-right panel arrangement to link it broadly to the comic strip of the 1890s and later. The comic strip itself (whose true immediate origins are to be found in the illustrated European fiction of the 19th Century, particularly that of Victorian England, and most specifically in the serially-published novels of Charles Dickens with their numerous illustrations in cartoon style by Cruikshank and Browne) is an easily defined art form: the intrinsic elements which set it sharply and necessarily apart from illustrated fiction, gag cartoons, or other popular graphic publications are found in the form almost from the date of its sudden inception in the newspaper comic art sections of the 1890s, and are inseparable from it. A reasonable definition incorporating all vital elements might read: "Comic Strip: *A serially published, episodic, open-ended dramatic narrative or series of linked anecdotes about recurrent identified characters, told in successive drawings regularly enclosing ballooned dialogue or its equivalent and generally minimal narrative text.*"

Nothing here involves us irrelevantly with morality, topicality, a stipulated number of panels per episode, or a specific method of publication, yet we have the definitive quintessence of the elements which, so combined, make the comic strip at once a unique bridge between prose narrative and fictional cinema and an enormously fulfilling art form in its own right. It is obvious that Mr. Kunzle's ideas about the comic strip, left unchallenged by his isolation in the Trotwoodian sanctuary of Santa Barbara academia, lead nowhere except to the passing convenience of Mr. Kunzle himself, and can be dismissed by anyone seriously concerned with the subject. There will probably be further volumes emerging from Mr. Kunzle's ivied demesne (the current book is subtitled: *History of the Comic Strip, Volume 1*), the second of which will very likely jam-pack 450-plus pages with pointless thousands of comic magazine excerpts from the 1800s that look like strips to Mr. Kunzle, and the third of which may actually venture into the beginnings of the comic strip in the American press. Few will await these works with impatience.

In the meantime, the present book *is* an informative text on its actual subject; if price is of no concern to the reader, it is certainly worth acquiring as a fundamental work in that area.

. . . And Disney Books

Disneyana by Cecil Munsey (Hawthorn Books; 385 pages, 540 black and white photos, 16 pages in color; $19.95) is the second of the three "official" Disney books. (*The Art of Walt Disney* was the first, a new biography of Walt Disney will be the third.) This one deals with Disney "collectibles" — toys, comic books, games, etc. It's a disappointing book; there are too many illustrations, reproduced too small, and too many reproductions of advertisements, rather than photographs of the Disney merchandise itself. Munsey's text is also sub-par. He is one of those maddeningly imprecise writers who can take information from a perfectly good source and twist it so it isn't quite right, and yet not altogether wrong. (He is also capable of outright errors, sometimes contradicting himself from one page to the next.) There is a lot of new information in the book, but it has to be approached with caution, given Munsey's defects as a writer.

This all sounds very negative, and let me hasten to say that many of the book's illustrations are fascinating, and anyone whose interest in Disney is as strong as mine should not hesitate to buy it. But other potential purchasers should examine it carefully before plunking down their $19.95.

The Art of Walt Disney by Christopher Finch (Abrams, 1973; 458 pages, 763 illustrations, including 351 in color; $45.00), last year's big Disney book, is also a mixed blessing. The illustrations for this book can be faulted, too (some are misidentified, like the background from *Snow White* that is grouped with backgrounds from *Pinocchio*; some photographs are reproduced too small, and some illustrations — like the colossal foldouts — are far too big;

publicity drawings and paintings are sometimes used instead of artwork from the films themselves; and so on), but the good far outweighs the bad. All the animation drawings, layouts, background paintings and story sketches provide us with the best glimpse of the Disney artists at work since Robert Feild's original *Art of Walt Disney* was published in 1942.

Finch is a much better writer than Munsey, and far more trustworthy. Unfortunately, his prose lacks the spark that only an absorbing interest in the Disney films — at least the animated ones — could have provided. He is much too obviously a writer on assignment, learning what he needs to know to write a solid, professional book, but never driven by a great curiosity to learn more than is really necessary. Sometimes, as in his discussions of all the terrible Disney live-action films, you can almost hear him stifling a yawn — and struggling to find something good to say.

The Disney Films by Leonard Maltin (Crown, 1973; 312 pages, 200 illustrations; $9.95) is a much less impressive book than *The Art of Walt Disney*. Its illustrations consist mostly of stills from the Disney features, and the text is largely a library research job, with credits for each feature, a plot summary, excerpts from contemporary reviews and an occasional interview, and a few critical comments by Maltin on each film. Hardly a large-scale work of scholarship, and, unfortunately, hardly error-free; David R. Smith, the Disney archivist, put out a six-page listing of errors in the book shortly after it was published. The errors are mostly minor ones, and don't really impair *The Disney Films'* great usefulness. The Maltin book is in effect a reference book, one that I have used constantly since it was published. *The Art of Walt Disney*, for all the light it sheds on the Disney films, does not serve the same function. If I had to choose between the Maltin and Finch books, I would choose Finch's, without hesitation; but I'm very glad that I have both. In fact, I have two copies of the Maltin book, one for the bookshelf and one to mark in. For anyone who wants a ready source of (mostly) reliable information about the Disney films, the Maltin book should fill the bill very nicely. *Mike Barrier*

With and Without Bakshi

I saw **The Nine Lives of Fritz the Cat** last summer, at a midnight show during the Atlanta International Film Festival. The audience's reaction was much more interesting than the film itself. At first the crowd was relaxed and friendly; they had good memories of the original *Fritz the Cat* (1972), and this gave *Nine Lives* a head start. But by midway in the picture, the crowd's laughter had fallen off sharply, and a steady stream of people was leaving the auditorium. At the two-thirds mark, the stream had turned into a flood. That's when I left myself, so I don't know how many hardy souls stuck it out to the end.

The crowd's disappointment was fully justified. Bob Taylor, who directed the sequel, has a limited gift for low comedy (the one good bit in the picture is a sequence involving Fritz and a wino who thinks he's God), but that's all. When, in *Nine Lives*, he tries to move up to something a little more demanding (such as a sequence in Hitler's bunker), the results are not even offensive; they're just embarrassing. When Taylor goes beyond the simple and obvious, he gets lost, and he loses his audience, too.

Despite the virtually unanimous hostility of the film critics, *Nine Lives* made a small profit at the boxoffice — proof that a good picture (the original *Fritz*) can sometimes pull a bad one along with it. The film did not do well enough, however, to save the Steve Krantz studio, which is now shuttered, probably for good. On the evidence of *Nine Lives* — the third Krantz feature cartoon — that's nothing to cry about.

The first two Krantz features — *Fritz* and **Heavy Traffic** (1973) — were vastly superior to *Nine Lives*, because they were directed by Ralph Bakshi. Bakshi's two films, while just as raw as Taylor's, had an intensity and sincerity that is totally lacking in *Nine Lives*. Bakshi seemed to be sharing experiences with his audience; Taylor, by comparison, was just a fresh kid telling a dirty joke.

Krantz and Bakshi broke up in 1973, after a long and stormy relationship. In effect, Krantz got his revenge with *Nine Lives*, because that film beat Bakshi's own third feature film to the theaters. *Coonskin*, Bakshi's feature, was completed last summer, and could have been released then (it was scheduled for a premiere at the Atlanta festival, and then withdrawn), but was held back for a December release, probably because *Nine Lives* had left such a bad taste in everyone's mouths. To add insult to injury, *Heavy Traffic* has been reissued in an "R" version (it was originally an "X"), and has turned up on a double bill with *Nine Lives*.

If anyone bothers to compare the two features, the results can only be favorable to Bakshi and *Traffic*. Bakshi's second feature is an extraordinary film, despite its considerable flaws.

Those flaws would be fatal to a less gifted director. For example, Bakshi makes it extraordinarily difficult to follow his story; the dialogue carries many of the important story points, but Bakshi smudges them repeatedly, either by distracting us with flashy visuals or by letting his actors get away with poor delivery. Simple exposition poses problems for Bakshi that a more routine director would solve with ease.

But Bakshi's clumsiness is the price we pay for the many remarkable things in *Heavy Traffic*, such as the way he combines live-action with animation. There's nothing new in combining the two; cartoon-makers have been doing it for more than 50 years. But usually, either the animation or the live-action looks false and out of place. Bakshi succeeded where others had failed because he treated the live-action footage as simply another element in his animated film. He tinted it, doctored it and otherwise used it as freely as he might have used drawings by his animators and background artists. His innovations are especially remarkable because he made them on a small budget, and without a special effects department.

Bakshi could achieve such a mixture of oil and water because there are strong, solid ideas behind his film. Even when there are lapses in execution — and there are lots of them in *Heavy Traffic* — Bakshi's conception still gets across. His good ideas often seem to be trying to break through cobwebs, so that we can see them clearly. When they succeed, the film's shortcomings become irrelevant.

One of the best examples is the sequence near the end of *Traffic* when Michael, the young cartoonist who is the film's principal character, is shot to death by Shorty, a jealous, crippled bouncer who has been spurned by

Carol, a black barmaid who has become Michael's girl friend. The film's pace slows to excruciatingly slow motion as the bullet flies toward Michael's forehead — but time's pace is different for Michael than for the bullet or the other characters. He moves in something closer to normal time, seeing the bullet clearly and responding to it, while Carol, beside him, moves more slowly, oblivious to it. But Michael has time only to recognize his own death hurtling toward him; he does not have time to escape it. The bullet enters his brain and blows his head apart; seen against a melting cityscape, he crumples to the sidewalk, and Carol, suddenly aware of what has happened, is transformed into a black crow and flies away shrieking in fright. The screen is then filled with a wild, disordered fantasy, like the last shards of a dying man's consciousness; it closes when a satanic figure crushes Michael's head in his hand.

This sequence is a virtuoso piece, important for at least two reasons. For one thing, it demonstrates that great subtleties in timing are possible in very slow animation, as well as very fast animation. Back in the Forties, directors like Bob Clampett and Tex Avery showed that time could be speeded up, distorted and generally twisted out of shape without running the risk of confusing or annoying an audience; in *Heavy Traffic*, Bakshi shows that slow time — at several different speeds at once — can be just as effective in the hands of a director who knows how to use it.

In his approach to violence, Bakshi again takes a completely different tack from that of the earlier cartoon directors; but in doing so, he reveals his kinship with those old masters. Clampett and Avery used violence as a means to an end; it was always an excuse for pulling the whole cartoon world to pieces and putting it back together again. Later, Chuck Jones — in his Road Runner cartoons — used violence in another way; his character the Coyote was the victim of massive explosions and other catastrophes, but what mattered was the Coyote's humiliation, not the physical damage he suffered.

Bakshi depicts violence differently; he examines it coolly and without flinching. Unlike the older directors, he is concerned primarily with the violent act itself. But he doesn't try to shock or assault us with the image on the screen. Instead, he puts aesthetic distance between us and the violence, through the resources of animation. Thus, the "godfather" is blasted full of holes — and ignores them — during a dreamlike fantasy; Michael dies in that artful slow-motion sequence. We respond to these sequences with our emotions, not in the pits of our stomachs. Like the earlier directors, Bakshi understands how animation can transform violence — or any other human activity — into art.

From Heavy Traffic.

Bakshi's kinship with the earlier directors was expressed as well in his characters, which are as solid and three-dimensional (in conception, if not always in the actual drawing) as those in any Disney cartoon. But — even more in *Traffic* than in *Fritz* — Bakshi also moves with ease in the flatter, stranger world that is the legacy of modern artists. He is able to combine these two traditions because he is concerned with the emotional possibilities that 20th Century art offers. By using angry colors that spill outside inked lines and assume a life of their own, he can achieve an emotional intensity that might otherwise elude him; by staging a Mafia 'soldier's' confrontation with the 'godfather' as a surrealist nightmare, he can make it far more chilling than it would have been if handled more conventionally. In other words, when Bakshi uses the vocabulary of 20th Century art, he is not trying to impress anybody; he is speaking in his own tongue. Animation's traditional wardrobe simply wouldn't fit Bakshi's new subject matter, so he devised a new one.

That subject matter is, in part, autobiographical, almost to the point of narcissism. Michael, the leading character in *Traffic*, resembles Bakshi, and is drawn in something approaching an illustrator's style; his parents and almost all the other characters are gargoyles by comparison. In *Traffic*, as in *Fritz*, some of the more violent episodes get away from Bakshi; in them, he seems to be exorcising personal demons, without paying much attention to his audience.

Since *Traffic* appeared, Bakshi has played up its autobiographical elements; in a television interview last summer, he described the film as "an autobiographical story about growing up in Brownsville," the Brooklyn ghetto where Bakshi spent his childhood.

Sometimes, when Bakshi talks about putting himself into his films, he approaches self-parody. Here, for example, is some of what he said in an interview last fall in *The New York Times*: "The Ratings Board hates me . . . They don't trust this kid off the Brooklyn streets who dares to have a mind. He's a Brooklyn kid, so everything he does on the screen must be dirty . . . I'm about as erotic as Adolf Hitler! My movies are anti-erotic. I hate sex. I always have. My films are filled with disgust of sex, life, everything." Like other show biz folk who are always asked the same questions in interviews, Bakshi has his act ("The Manic-Depressive Young Animator") down pat.

It remains to be seen if all this posturing and shouting is just a hype, or if it is going to show up in Bakshi's films, too. If it does, then what was honest and moving in his first two features will have hardened into cliches just as deadly as any of those in the recent Disney features.

There are bad signs. For one thing, Bakshi is turning more and more toward live-action in his features, and on the evidence of his live-action sequences in *Heavy Traffic*, he has only the most rudimentary ideas about how to handle actors and stage scenes effectively. For another, the great excitement that accompanied the opening of Bakshi's own studio — the feeling among the people who worked there that they were in on the start of something important in the history of animation — has dissipated. Bakshi has squandered the immense good will that the members of his staff had for him.

But Bakshi has triumphed over many adversities so far, and he may be able to put his latest problems behind him, too. *Coonskin* will be in the theaters by the time this review appears, and it will tell us more about Ralph Bakshi's future — and the future of animation — than any speculation in these pages. *Mike Barrier*

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